STRONG

FITNESS MAGAZINE

BEST SHAPE OF YOUR LIFE

YOUR ULTIMATE 6-WEEK FAT BURNING PLAN

EASY ONE-PAN DINNERS

PERFECT FOR THE HOLIDAYS

SIT UP!

THE HEALTH RISKS OF POOR POSTURE

FOUR MINUTE SHRED

THE WORKOUT THAT WILL KICK YOUR BUTT

GREAT GLUTES

GET HER BUTT-SHAPING ROUTINE ON PG. 38

ARE WE PROTEIN OBSESSED?

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2015 $6.99

STRONGFITNESSMAG.COM

BCAAs – BACKED BY SCIENCE, & HIGHLY EFFECTIVE & DELICIOUS!

"Are BCAAs the Best Supplement you can take?"

INTELLIGENT DIETING SUPPORT

Caloric restriction, limiting carbs, increased cardio intensity; all essential for effective dieting, and all rapid ways to breakdown and flush away muscle. The muscle tissue breakdown that takes place when you're dieting reduces your metabolism and your ability to burn calories. Taking AMINOCORE feeds your muscles directly even while dieting and dramatically limits muscle deterioration. The net effect; you retain muscle, melt fat and maintain a higher metabolism. AMINOCORE the dieting secret you've been looking for.

THE BEST MIXABILITY, DELIVERY & ABSORPTION

AMINOCORE has Instaclear™; a cutting-edge solubility technology to BCAA dosage administration. Until now, delivery of a 100% pure 45:30:25 ratio BCAA powder in a potent research directed level (8,180 mg), ideal for ANABOLIC activity, was next to impossible. Aside from being the purest Pharmaceutical-Grade BCAAs, our Instaclear™ process FLASH-FREEZE-DRIES our 45:30:25 BCAA powder to create a truly soluble and easily-mixed BCAA drink that absorbs in a truly liquid form.

IS ORAL SUPPLEMENTATION EFFECTIVE?

The first question any skeptical supplement buyer should always ask is, "That's great in a lab, but if I take it, will it work?" The answer is definitively, yes! Oral liquid supplementation of 8.18 g of 45:30:25 ratio BCAAs boosted BCAA concentration in the blood and in muscle cells and activated the mTor-p70^{S6k} classic anabolic signal. This confirms that drinking your BCAAs (as in AMINOCORE) in a soluble liquid form replicates the research! You can literally implement this groundbreaking technology TODAY!

ALL BCAAs ARE NOT CREATED EQUAL!

When you're comparing one BCAA to the other, look closely at the formula – does it include glutamine passed off as real BCAAs? In contrast, the AMINOCORE label shows you precise BCAA amounts. Glutamine has its place, but it is not a Branched Chain Amino Acid (BCAA). AMINOCORE includes 8,180 mg of real BCAAs not glutamine. AMINOCORE is 100% PURE, FERMENTATION-DERIVED, PHARMACEUTICAL-GRADE, 45:30:25 ratio BCAAs. With added Ketoisocaproic acid (KIC) to further enhance the buffering of lactic acid (muscle toxin) and increase the levels of L-Leucine at the site of muscle. AMINOCORE contains additional highly bioavailable B-Vitamins not only enhance the anabolic environment, they help to release additional metabolic energy.

THE BOTTOM LINE!

BCAAs (Branched Chain Amino Acids - Leucine, Valine and Isoleucine) are one of the most effective supplements you can buy. BCAAs improve and maintain your muscle tone like nothing else. Having more muscle than fat creates the most ideal physical shape. A greater degree of Lean Body Mass (LBM) elevates your metabolism and in doing so can increase the rate at which you burn through calories. Finally, a truly effective BCAA supplement that mixes perfectly and tastes exceptionally good.

INFORMED-CHOICE.ORG Trusted by sport

INDEPENDENT 3RD PARTY TESTED
TESTED FREE FROM BANNED SUBSTANCES

AMINOCORE comes in 4 Flavors & Unflavored!

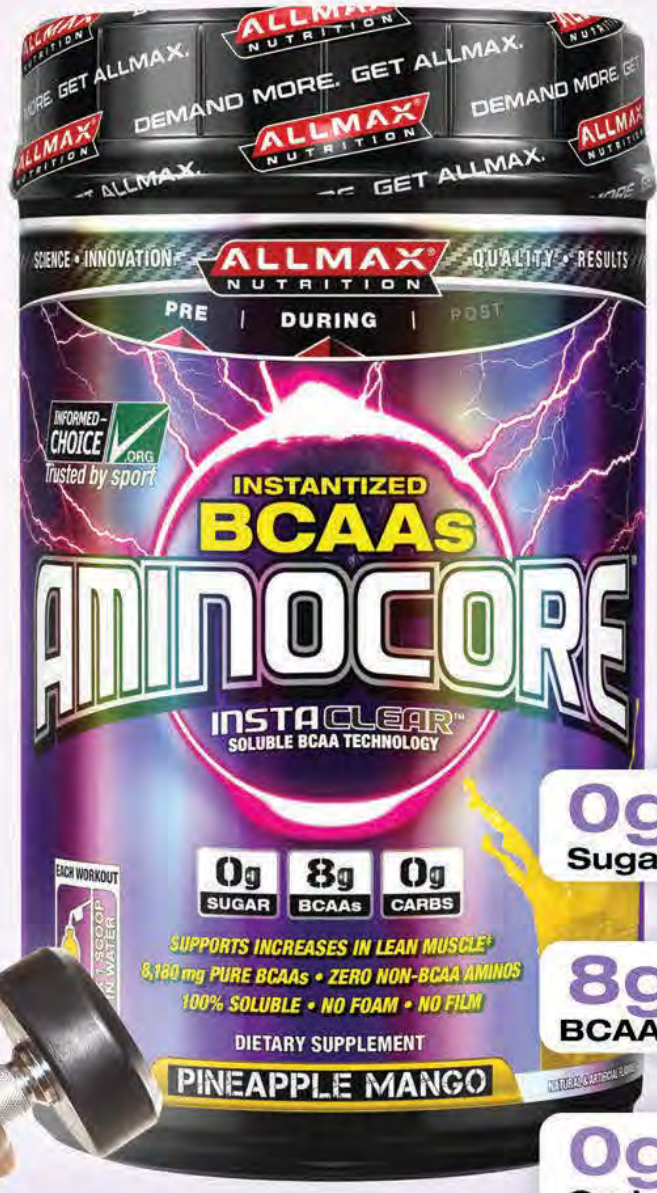
Available in two sizes:

44 servingsand 111 servings. Take 1 scoop with cold water every workout.

ALLMAX®
PROFESSIONAL GRADE SUPPLEMENTS

WWW.ALLMAXNUTRITION.COM

TEAM ALLMAX
MONICA WINN
BIKINI MODEL PRO



0g Sugar

8g BCAAs

0g Carbs

The Emergence of a Dominant Muscle Builder

- 8,180 mg of 45:30:25 PURE INSTANT BCAAs
- FORTIFIED WITH FATIGUE-FIGHTING Alpha K.I.C.
- LOADED WITH 7 FORMS OF VITAMINS B3, B6, B9 & B12!

AVAILABLE AT:

BODY BUILDING.com · BEST PRICE NUTRITION · Healthy Planet · POPEYE'S SUPPLEMENTS · GOOD HEALTH · nutrition house · Fitshop.ca · Supplement Source · Vitamin Shoppe · Superstore · GNC LIVE WELL · SUPPLEMENT KING · vitamart · SVN Canada

*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

FEATURES/COVER STORIES

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2015

38 GREAT GLUTES
Want 'em? Our cover athlete Emilie Provencher steps away from the squat rack and shows us how it's done.

42 EASY ONE-PAN DINNERS
These healthy roasted entrees will have you saying "bye" to basic chicken breasts.

50 TRANSFORM YOUR BODY
Follow up last issue's muscle-building program with this six-week plan to melt fat.

66 ARE WE PROTEIN OBSESSED?
One expert says we're eating way too much, the other says we could be getting more. So which is it?

70 FOUR-MINUTE SHRED
This science-backed training method jacks up your metabolism in no time flat—but it won't be easy.

MORE MUST-READS INSIDE

26 LEARN THE ROPES
How to master a holy-grail exercise of functional fitness: the rope climb.

34 ONE TRACK MIND
How a two-time Olympic medalist gets her head in the game as she prepares for Rio.

60 TAKE A STAND
Find out how your posture affects everything from your mood to your workouts.

ON THE COVER

COVER MODEL EMILIE PROVENCHER
PHOTOGRAPHY PAUL BUCETA
HAIR & MAKEUP SARAH SCOTFORD
WARDROBE
BRA MODEL'S OWN, PANTS BY NIKE

FITNESS

28 Fit in a Flash
A 30-minute routine to show your glutes and hamstrings some love.

38 Beyond the Squat
Get ready to feel the burn with our cover athlete's lower-body blast.

70 Get Fit in Four
Give your heart and metabolism a boost in four grueling minutes.

50 Farewell to Fat
Show off your hard-earned muscle with this complete six-week fat loss plan.

76 Trainer Talk
Do you need gym accessories? Our personal trainer tells you which to go for and which to ditch.

HEALTH

60 The Power of Posture
A poor stance affects so much more than your appearance. Find out how improving your posture can better your health, and your workouts.

NUTRITION

30 Buff Bites
A big bowl of plant-based fuel to get your engines revving.

42 Recipes to the Rescue
Gourmet-looking recipes that take as little effort as they do dishes.

66 The Protein Debate
Is our love of protein making us lean and fit, or just plain sick?

MOTIVATION

34 Pro-Files
Olympic 100-meter hurdler Dawn Harper Nelson is going for gold.

36 Cover Athlete Insider
Why cover athlete Emilie Provencher traded her ballet slippers for heels.

74 Get Inspired
Fitness model Tiffany Gaston opens up about the difficult past that has made her strong.

78 Women to Watch
Three real women we couldn't help but notice.

80 STRONGCAMP Captured DOUBLE EDITION!
All the highlights from Toronto Round 2 and Minneapolis.

84 Fit List
Stress much? Don't panic. Follow these top tips for staying cool.

A GLUTE WORKOUT IN 30 MIN? HECK YEAH! CHECK IT OUT ON PG 28

IN EVERY ISSUE

EDITOR'S NOTE	14
CONTRIBUTORS	6
ADVISORY BOARD	8
YOU SAID IT	10
THE CIRCUIT	19
GYM BEAUTY	32

GET BEAUTY-FUL GIFT IDEAS ON PG 32

GET STRONGER @strongfitnessmag.com

Cover Girl Bonus

The gorgeous Emilie Provencher shares her secrets! Try her butt-boosting workout on page 38, then go online for her meal plan, nutrition tips and training advice.

PLUS:
A core workout for abs like these!

- **7-MINUTE SHREDS**
  Keep it tight this holiday season with fast and effective at-home workouts. No excuses!
- **JUST DESSERTS**
  Don't skip the best course! These healthy recipes will let you have your cake and eat it too.
- **GET ROPED IN**
  Find out why your fitness routine NEEDS battle ropes! ***Plus:*** A workout to whip every muscle into shape!

Health & Gift-ness

Check out our annual holiday gift guide and surprise the buff babe in your life with stuff she'll actually use.

WIN!

Go to **strongfitnessmag.com** to find out how you could win a prize pack from Paleoful grain-free, vegan baking mixes!

NEW!

ENERGY, AMINOS & DIET!

AminoCuts could be the most delicious drink mix we've ever made. Perfect to enjoy anytime; easy-to-mix, full of Aminos and loaded with diet-friendly ingredients like natural-source Caffeine, , Taurine, C.L.A. and Green Coffee extract – AminoCuts is ideal anytime you need an energy boost!

AMINOCUTS

USAGE CHART: Choose Your Time!

	Scoops	Pre-Cardio, Training or Physical Activity
Morning	1 to 2	AM Boost, Morning Cardio, or
Mid-Day	1	Mid-Day Boost or Training, or
Evening	1 to 2	Pre-Cardio or Exercise Class

These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

Piña Colada

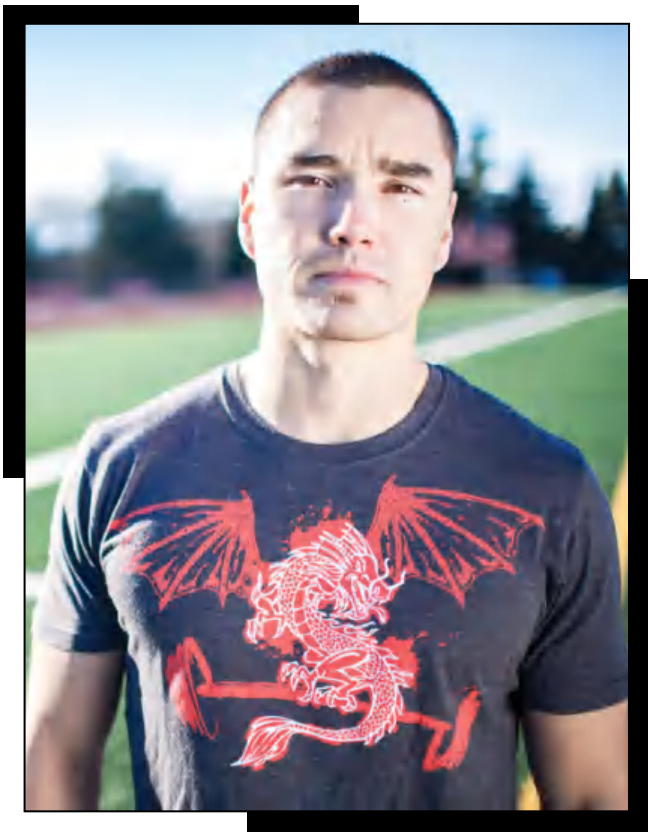
Goji Berry Martini

Quick & Delicious!

On your way to do some Cardio? Need a mid-afternoon "pick-me-up"? AminoCuts fits your life and your diet. Available in 2 mouth-watering flavors!

ALLMAX®
PROFESSIONAL GRADE SUPPLEMENTS

BEST PRICE NUTRITION.com AllStarHealth SUPPZ.com



JON-ERIK KAWAMOTO, MSC, CSCS, CSEP-CEP

"Get Fit in Four," pg 70

If you're an avid reader of fitness magazines, websites or journals, chances are, you've learned something new or tried out a workout from Jon-Erik Kawamoto. With 10 years as a personal trainer and more than 150 published articles under his belt, Jon-Erik has become a household name among fitness professionals and enthusiasts alike. ***"I have a natural passion for helping others and sharing their successes under my coaching,"*** he says. ***"Fitness is not only my passion, but my way of life."***

For this issue, Jon-Erik gives us an education on the benefits of Tabata-style training, and provides a humbling 16-minute workout to boot. If you're looking for an effective way to ramp up your heart rate while spending less time on the treadmill, this method is for you. As for Jon-Erik's favorite exercise to do, Tabata-style? "The squat to press. This full body movement hits all the major muscles and makes your heart pound."

MARIANNE WREN, RECIPE DEVELOPER & FOOD STYLIST

"RECIPES TO THE RESCUE," pg 42

Toronto-based foodie Marianne Wren has been developing delicious recipes and making them look beautiful for the camera for 18 years. Her work has appeared in commercials, movies, and in a number of magazines including *Clean Eating, Canadian Living,* and *The Eat Clean Diet Cookbook.*

KASIA WIND, FREELANCE WRITER

"THE POWER OF POSTURE," pg 60

Tackling women's health issues from psychology to nutrition allows Kasia to delve deep into topics she can relate to personally. Formerly, Kasia was a health editor for five years and has had work appear in reputable magazines including *Oxygen* and *Inside Fitness,* as well as the *Huffington Post* and several national PR campaigns.

DAVE LAUS, PHOTOGRAPHER

"GET FIT IN FOUR," pg 70

Dave first stepped onto the fitness scene four years ago, his photography hobby quickly transformed into a full-blown passion. Now, his portfolio is packed with numerous magazine covers and dozens of training features. This summer, he and wife Nichelle opened their own training facility and photography studio, Optimum Training Centre Toronto (pictured on page 70!)

DAN FILIPE, FREELANCE WRITER

"THE PROTEIN DEBATE," pg 66

Dan is no stranger to the world of fitness. He has been a fitness writer for five years, with work appearing in *MuscleMag, Reps* and *Oxygen* magazines. In his 20s, he played professional American football in Europe and today he owns and operates online retail company Gym Gear Canada.

WIL SHELTON, FREELANCE WRITER

"GOING FOR GOLD," pg 34

Bench press coach and motivational speaker Wil Shelton has lifted weights for over 33 years. He began writing articles on the subject two years ago and has since been published in *Train Magazine,* and regularly contributes to *FitnessRx* for men and ironmanmagazine.com.

JENN PIKE, RHN

"BOWL OF ENERGY," pg 30

As a busy, working mom of two, Jenn understands that vital health and wellbeing are a journey to be enjoyed, and not a struggle to be forced. She is the bestselling author of *The Simplicity Project: A Simple, No-Nonsense Approach To Losing Weight & Changing Your Body Forever!,* as well as a nationally sought-after yoga specialist.

JON-ERIK KAWAMOTO PHOTO BY MARK BURNHAM WIL SHELTON PHOTO BY OTIS SANDERS DAN FILIPE & KASIA WIND PHOTO BY PAUL BUCETA
MARIANNE WREN PHOTO BY PIERRE GAUTREAU DAVE LAUS PHOTO BY LORI FABRIZIO JENNIFER PIKE PHOTO BY NAT CARON PHOTOGRAPHY KETTLEBELL PHOTO SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/DEYMOS.HR

A REFUND IF YOU DON'T FEEL RESULTS.

RESULTS IF YOU DO.

Take the *CocoaVia*® Results or Refund three week challenge. The cocoa flavanols in *CocoaVia*® supplement maintain a healthy flow of oxygen and nutrients to your blood vessels, important for your overall exercise performance†. 100% money-back guarantee if you don't feel a difference in three weeks.

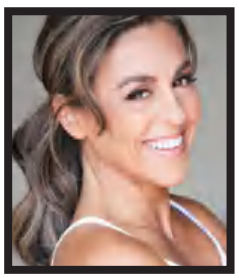
Learn more at **CocoaVia.com/results**

CocoaVia® BRAND™

†This statement has not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

®/™ Trademarks © Mars, Incorporated. 2015.

Tips & More From Our Panel of Experts



MICHELLE ARMSTRONG, MM, BMSC, CPT, NWS

MINDSET EXPERT; FITNESS TRAINER; BESTSELLING AUTHOR; MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER; "THE LIFE RENOVATOR".

You Asked:
How can I stop my habit of emotional eating?

Emotional eating can be a response to any feeling you don't know how to process and manage, such as stress, frustration and even happiness. Learning to differentiate between emotional hunger and "true hunger" is the first step to putting an end to this disempowering behavior.

True hunger is when the body has a legitimate need for food to sustain itself. There is a physical sensation that can be identified (like a growling stomach) and any food will satisfy the hunger. Emotional hunger is the response to a feeling, and often involves an intense craving for something specific, like chocolate or potato chips. This type of hunger is immediate—unlike true hunger which is gradual—and often accompanied by feelings of shame, remorse or guilt after eating. To end emotional eating you must begin identifying what triggers you to eat and when, and which feelings arise.

MICHELLE'S ADVICE

Ask yourself the next time you're hungry, "Is this a true hunger sensation or am I experiencing feelings that make me uncomfortable?" If you identify your need to eat as emotional, follow these steps: Put your feelings on paper (in a journal) or share them with a friend. Go for a walk and consider this: *What triggered this feeling? What do I instead need to feel to release it?* If over time the same feelings keep surfacing and you're challenged with processing them on your own, consider speaking with a professional as there may be deeper issues going on that you're not currently aware of.

ADVISORY BOARD

FITNESS

Gina Tacconi-Moore, BLA, LMT, CFL1
Founder and owner of CrossFit Lowell and The Treatment Room, Lowell MA; licensed massage therapist and full body certified in Active Release Techniques

Cathy Savage
Competition prep coach, owner of Cathy Savage Fitness, online nutrition and training program; founder of Camp Savage

Emily Pantaleo, BSc, BEd
Certified personal trainer and fitness instructor; fitness model

Fatima Leite Kusch
Award-winning competition coach; certified sports nutrition advisor; certified personal trainer; founder of Team Blessed Bodies and FitnessPrint

Mike T. Nelson, PhD, MSME, CSCS
Adjunct professor and member of the American College of Sports Medicine; PhD Exercise Physiology and MS Mechanical Engineering (Biomechanics)

MIND & BODY

Linda Malone, BSc, E-RYT 500
Founder and director, Iam Yoga Inc., Toronto & Founder of The Blu Matter Project

Michelle Armstrong, MM, BMSc, CPT, NWS
Mindset Expert; fitness trainer; bestselling author; motivational speaker; "The Life Renovator"

Zain Saraswati Jamal
Certified holistic sports nutritionist; yoga teacher; personal coach; founder of yoga, fitness and lifestyle blog Eve Post Apple

HEALTH

Aric Sudicky, BSc, BED, CPTS, CFNS
Health, fitness and nutrition expert; published writer and fitness model; University of Calgary, Faculty of Medicine

Joelene Huber, MSc(A), PhD, MD
Pediatrician; staff physician, St. Michael's Hospital Toronto; assistant professor, Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto; founder of uber-healthykids.com

Michael Hart, BSc, MD, CCFP
Family Physician; Cannabinoid medicine; Nutritionist; Head physician at Kilworth Medical Clinic, London, ON

NUTRITION

Emily Satrazemis, RD, CSSD
Sports Dietitian; Nutrition Consultant; and Nutrition Communications Manager, Sacramento, CA

Jenn Pike, RHN
Holistic Nutritionist & Bestselling author of *The Simplicity Project: A Simple, No-Nonsense Approach To Losing Weight & Changing Your Body Forever!*

SPORTS MEDICINE

Brad Baldwin, BA, DC
Chiropractor, Bayview Chiropractic Health Centre, Toronto; certified contemporary acupuncturist; trained in active release techniques

James Ho, DC, BHSc
Chiropractor, Athlete's Care Sports Medicine Centres, Toronto; active release techniques provider; consultant to recreational and professional athletes

SUPPLEMENTS

Kamal Patel, MPH, MBA, PhD
Director at Examine.com, a leading online resource for nutrition and supplement study analysis.

MICHELLE ARMSTRONG PHOTO AND COOKIE PHOTO PAUL BUCETA FORK AND SPOON SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/TRIBALIUM

ASHLEY KALTWASSER
2X MS.BIKINI OLYMPIA

GASPARI NUTRITION

DEDICATION, DRIVE &

FOCUS

Take your training to the next level with Gaspari Nutrition's new pre-workout, **SP250**™. The innovative formula is designed to help you power through the toughest workouts and keep you focused on what matters most . . . **RESULTS**†.

†These statements have not been evaluated by the food and drug administration. This product is not intentded to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

© 2015 Gaspari Nutrition. All Rights Reserved. WWW.GASPARINUTRITION.COM

yousaidit

We want to hear what you have to say!
Email us your thoughts on how we're doing at yousaidit@strongfitnessmag.com. Are you digging the content and loving the workouts? Do you have a success story to share? What does being STRONG mean to you? Community and feedback is important to us and we want to know what's on your mind.

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL!

STRONG ENOUGH FOR A WOMAN

This was my first issue and it certainly lived up to my expectations. I've scarcely come across information with women as the target audience that is less fluff and more about building lean, strong muscle. I am currently using (and loving) the "Muscle Up" plan from the Sept/Oct issue. Finally I can kick my husband's fitness mags to the curb. I've got my own! - ASHLEY, VIA E-MAIL

Thanks, Ashley! *We loved your letter so much, we're sending you a STRONG tank top!*

STUFF YOU LOVED

Steve, *via e-mail*
I loved the story about Alison Sheltrown in the Sept/Oct issue ("I'm Beating Parkinson's Every Damn Day"). I have been battling Parkinson's for over eight years with a boxing-inspired fitness program for people with the disease, and I know it has helped beat back my symptoms.

Emily, *via Facebook*
It was my daughter's birthday so I got up early and made her the pumpkin pie breakfast cookies from the latest issue. This recipe is full of healthy ingredients and she loved them! She said, "Mommy, I get cookies for breakfast?" What she doesn't know won't hurt her!

@Saraheevans_livingfitnclean, *via Instagram*
Love the color cover, STRONG! This cover really makes a statement.

KEEPIN' IT REAL

Larissa, *via e-mail*
Seeing 100 percent authentic, athletic, everyday women grace the pages of STRONG is so much more inspiring than the "perfect" bodies thrown into other magazines.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Christine, *via e-mail*
I am a yoga lover and runner but have been thinking about starting to incorporate lifting and other methods of training into my routine. I went to the women's "health" section in the magazine aisle and eliminated any publications with covers advertising how to be sexy, how to get a flat stomach or fad dieting. Your cover stood out, and met my requirements. The issue came home with me and I'm loving it!

#STRONGtankday
On October 1st, you guys wore it proud and showed your support. Thank you!

Bestselling Author, Transformation & Mindset Expert, Fitness Trainer, Founder of Renovate Your Life™ Events

Create Your Best Body & Life by
TRANSFORMING YOUR MIND!

NEW Weight Loss and Health Book from
Life Renovator Michelle Armstrong
Offers A Unique and Empowering Approach
to Creating the Body & Life You Want.

Discover How To:

Look your best and feel amazing!
Finally stop procrastinating and
start taking MASSIVE action.
Conquer emotional eating once and for all!
End limiting self-talk and
self-sabotaging behaviours.
Rise above your fears and live your best life!
And much, much more!

Michelle ARMSTRONG

AKA THE LIFE RENOVATOR
EMPOWERING YOU TO LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE™
www.MichelleArmstrong.com

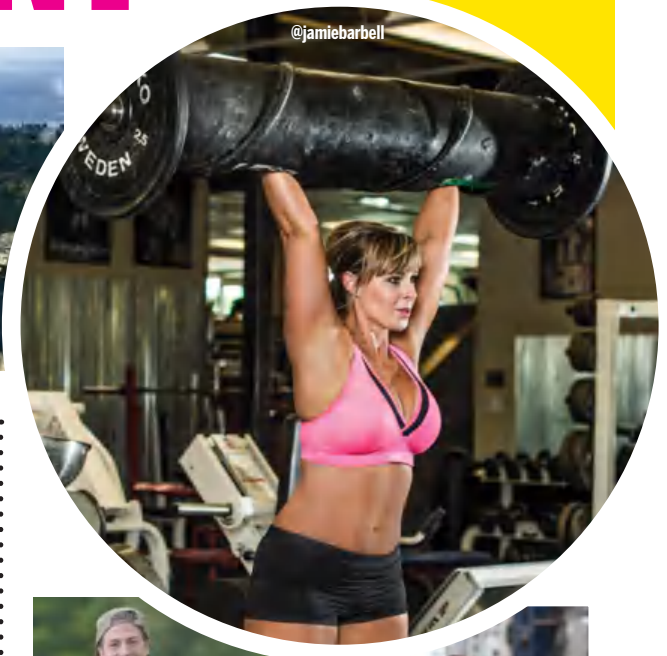
@michellearmst

AVAILABLE NOW! **ONLINE & IN ALL MAJOR BOOKSTORES**
Get your copy today and receive bonus gifts from Michelle to support your transformation journey.

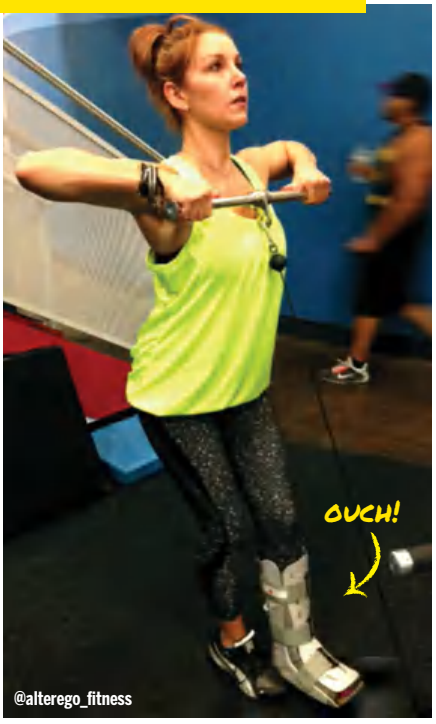
Posts We Love!

#mystrong MOMENT

Thank you for inspiring us with your fiercest moments in health and fitness. You are proof that our readers are STRONG. Keep posting your pics with the hashtag **#mystrongmoment**

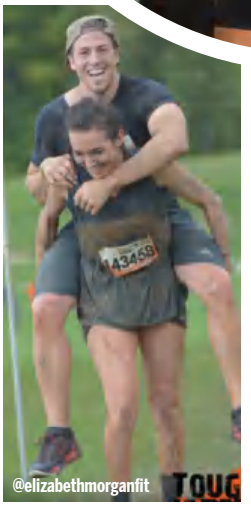


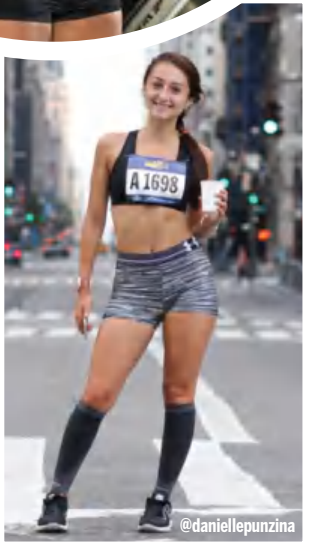
OUR FAVORITE MOMENT



Jessica Glazer, *HAWTHORNE, NJ*

Being an elementary phys ed and health teacher, as well as a personal trainer, Jessica knows she has to lead by example. So when a slip on some rocks at the beach left her with two torn ligaments requiring surgery, it didn't stop her from keeping the rest of her body in top form. "I have been making it to the gym and keeping both my body and mind healthy," she says. This is the second injury of this kind Jessica has suffered in five years, but she's not letting it get her down. "Knowing I had a similar road ahead could have been devastating, however, I have been choosing to climb over this obstacle, even if it's with one leg!"





@JAMIEBARBELL PHOTO JUSTIN JINDRA @DYNAMICRANGEPHOTO @DANIELLEPUNZINA PHOTO FREDDIE CARAMANICO @NEWEDGEFITNESS PHOTO WITH @CTESTANI83 @COURTDAWN @GTESTANI @ROBYNKENNETT

STRONGCAMP
AMBASSADOR
SEARCH
Do you have what it takes?
WE'RE ON THE HUNT FOR 3 FEMALE PERSONAL TRAINERS
TO RUN STRONGCAMP DATES IN 2016!
VOTING ENDS 11.30.15
VISIT STRONG-CAMP.COM FOR CONTEST DETAILS
STRONGCAMP
PRESENTED BY STRONG FITNESS MAGAZINE

WHAT'S YOUR MOTIVATION?

If there's one good thing you can count on when you begrudgingly roll out of bed on a Monday morning, grab your coffee and start scrolling through your social media feeds, it's a serious helping of motivation. Thanks to the genius who recognized that the beginning of the week is universally painful, and made #MotivationMonday a household hashtag, we can now rely on our Facebook friends and stars of Instagram to give us a swift kick in the proverbial pants.

But what about the rest of the week? On those days when the allure of the sofa is particularly strong, or you're fighting the temptation to quit in the middle of a set, where do you turn to find not just the strength, but the desire to push on? Because that's what motivation is in the simplest terms—the desire to do. And as we head into a season when we could easily just watch holiday movies in a onesie with a plate of cookies, the desire to do the whole fitness thing can be fleeting.

Each of us finds motivation in different forms. If you're the visual type that gets fired up from an image, you'll love the photo feature on page 16. It perfectly captures that moment in a woman's internal struggle when drive defeats doubt (and makes you want to hurl yourself off the couch and into the gym).

This theme pops up again in the incredibly brave autobiographical piece by fitness model Tiffany Gaston on page 74, in which she shares her story of overcoming anorexia and later, abuse. In working with her on this feature, she experienced several moments of doubt. But her vulnerability is what makes it so raw, and will no doubt resonate with readers who have struggled, or are struggling, with similar circumstances.

Not that motivation always needs to come from a painful or deeply emotional place—sometimes we're driven by a need to be better, or maybe even the best. Page 34 profiles Dawn Harper Nelson, a woman whose competitive spirit has earned her back-to-back Olympic medals, and if things go as planned, will propel her to the podium again in 2016.

These stories are what I truly love about STRONG, and I hope are a part of what keeps you coming back each issue. These days, there is no shortage of fitness publications or training advice at your disposal. But after two years (yes, this is our second anniversary issue), I feel we continue to carve our own path, and perhaps even our own genre. We are more than women's fitness; we are women's empowerment. And in my eyes, nothing could be more motivating.

MY FAVORITE #MONDAYMOTIVATION WE'VE EVER POSTED.

STAY STRONG,
KIRSTYN BROWN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

STRONG
FITNESS MAGAZINE

PRESIDENT
Kim Gunther

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Kirstyn Brown

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Erin Lutz

CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER
Paul Buceta

SENIOR DESIGNER
Jacqueline Hornyak

DESIGNER
Andreia Pereira

COPY EDITOR
Chelsea Clarke

PHOTOGRAPHY COORDINATOR
Annette Milbers

ADVERTISING SALES
Melissa Toulouse
mtoulouse@strongfitnessmag.com
289-232-1055

DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EVENTS
Chelsea Clarke
cclarke@strongfitnessmag.com

LEGAL COUNSEL
Scot Patriquin
Brauti Thorning Zibarras LLP

CONTRIBUTORS
Joe Arko, Michelle Armstrong, Rita Catolino, Emily Satrazemis, Lori Fabrizio, Dan Filipe, Lisa Hensley, Jon-Erik Kawamoto, Dave Laus, Paul McIntyre, Valeria Nova, James Patrick, Jenn Pike, Sarah Scotfod, Wil Shelton, Alexandra Smith, Joy Victoria, Kasia Wind, Marianne Wren.

SPECIAL THANKS
Allegiance Fitness MN, CrossFit Colosseum, EPC Burlington, GirlsGone Rx, OTC Toronto, Tam Lam of Clay Media.

DISTRIBUTION
Disticor Magazine Distribution Services
Office 905-619-6565

PRINTING
RR Donnelley • Mark de Groot
Office 905-362-3245

Always consult your physician before beginning any exercise program. This general information is not intended to diagnose any medical condition or to replace your healthcare professional. Consult with your healthcare professional to design an appropriate exercise prescription. If you experience any pain or difficulty with these exercises, stop and consult your healthcare provider. If you experience any symptoms of weakness, unsteadiness, light-headedness or dizziness, chest pain or pressure, nausea, or shortness of breath. Mild soreness after exercise may be experienced after beginning a new exercise. Contact your physician if the soreness does not improve after 2-3 days.

CROSSFIT PHOTOS COURTESY OF SHOOTING MONSTERS PHOTOGRAPHY AND GIRLS GONE RX SANTA ILLUSTRATION SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/ALEXVECTOR

TEAM SPIRIT IS THE NAME OF THE GAME AT GIRLSGONE RX CROSSFIT EVENTS.

Holiday Happenings

Fitness events more fun than Christmas morning.

NOV 19-21

FINAL POSEDOWN

While many fitness competitors have already settled into their offseason with sweatpants and pie, hundreds of ladies will be slipping into their rhinestone bikinis one last time at the 2015 **Fitness America Weekend** in Las Vegas, NV.

DEC 3-6

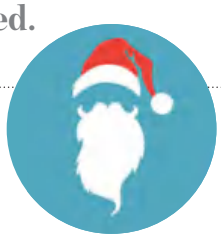
LIFT YOUR SPIRITS

Athletes of all ages, sizes and nationalities will be raising the bar at the **USA Weightlifting American Open** in Reno, NV. Show up to compete or cheer on the participants.

DEC 5

WOD FOR A CURE

Charitable CrossFit organization **Girls Gone Rx** will be hitting up Port St. Lucie, FL. Proceeds from this three-woman team event go to the not-for-profit Bright Pink. Ridiculous pink attire is encouraged.



DEC 4-11

SUNNY ESCAPE

If you attended a **STRONGCAMP** this year, you won't want to miss the special Caribbean reunion in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic.

WANT IN? CHECK OUT STRONG-CAMP.COM FOR DETAILS AND REGISTRATION.

DEC 20

COOL RUNNING

Jingle all the way to the finish line in the **Santa Hustle 5k & Half Marathon** at Cedar Point in Sandusky, OH. Each participant gets a festive hat and beard, plus cookies and candy canes along the route.

pure ADRENALINE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVE LAUS

MODEL ALICIA BELL MAKEUP & HAIR LORI FABRIZIO OF TWO CHICKS AND SOME LIPSTICK

THE Bliss PROJECT

RETREAT WEEKEND

FIND YOUR TRIBE

AT THIS WEEKEND FILLED WITH EMPOWERMENT, PERSONAL GROWTH EXERCISES, MEDITATION, YOGA AND TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERS

JOIN US!

FEBRUARY 26 - 28, 2016

THE MARRIOTT,
NEWPORT BEACH,
CALIFORNIA

VISIT LORIHARDER.COM

LORI HARDER
AUTHOR
ENTREPRENEUR
FITNESS EXPERT
TRANSFORMATIONAL SPEAKER
FITNESS COVER MODEL
3X WORLD BIKINI &
FIGURE CHAMPION

OPEN TO ALL WOMEN READY TO ELEVATE THEIR LIVES!

the CIRCUIT

USEFUL NEWS, TIPS AND FACTS FROM THE HEALTH AND FITNESS WORLD.

fuel • supplements • fitness • health • fuel • supplements • fitness • health • fuel

Gain Freeze

Tough training session? Before you suffer through an ice bath to help speed up recovery, you might be better off going for a bike ride, according to recent research out of Australia. The study, published in the *Journal of Physiology*, found that **plunging into chilly waters post-workout actually reduced long-term growth in muscle size and strength.** Here's how it went down: 21 fit men performed strength training workouts twice a week, after which they either endured a chilly 10-minute bath, or cooled down on a bike. At the end of 12-weeks, the guys who cycled had greater muscle gains and increased strength compared to those who had to take the plunge. So what gives? Muscle biopsies revealed that cell activity required for muscle growth was stunted for up to two days post-workout in the ice bathers.

PHOTOGRAPHY PAUL BUCETA

CHILL OUT!

INSTEAD OF A POST-WORKOUT ICE BATH TRY A 10-MINUTE COOL DOWN OF LIGHT CYCLING, JOGGING, OR STRETCHING TO BOOST MUSCLE RECOVERY AND GROWTH.

SFM Get a battle ropes workout at *strongfitnessmag.com*

Get Some Rest

A new study published in the *Journal of Strength & Conditioning Research* comparing the acute metabolic response to battle rope workouts of 30-second intervals followed by either one- or two-minute rest periods found that shorter breaks elicited a higher energy expenditure.

10.3

AVERAGE NUMBER OF **CALORIES BURNED PER MINUTE** OF TRAINING WITH BATTLE ROPES.

HEAT ALERT

A good hot yoga session has a number of mind-body benefits including stress relief, mindfulness, flexibility and strength, but is it safe? A study by the American Council on Exercise (ACE) found that steady increases in heart-rate and core-temperature during a typical 90-minute Bikram yoga class were in fact cause for concern, especially in students unaccustomed to the practice's high temps and humidity. Their advice: seek out shorter classes of a max of 60 minutes and hydrate during and after class.

SIGNS OF HEAT EXHAUSTION

- Weak or rapid pulse
- Low blood pressure
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Dizziness
- General weakness
- Cold, clammy skin

What to do if you experience these symptoms:

- Stop exercising
- Move to a cool, well-ventilated area
- Lay down with feet elevated 12-18 inches
- Drink fluids
- Monitor temperature

Fatal Distraction

If you suddenly get exhausted in the middle of spin class, what's on your mind may be to blame, suggests findings from a study out of Texas A&M. It turns out, attempting a mental task during exercise can increase blood oxygen levels in the area of the brain responsible for physical movement, causing fatigue sooner than if you were just getting your sweat on. To help make sure your body doesn't bail out before your workout is through, try to eliminate all mental distractions: Finish up any important work before hitting the gym, stash your phone in your locker, or wear headphones to avoid conversations.

UNPLUG FOR A BETTER WORKOUT

BATTLE ROPES PHOTO: DAVE LAUS · MODEL: KASIA SITARZ · SHOT AT THE TREADMILL FACTORY
HEAT ALERT SOURCE: ACEFITNESS.ORG · IPHONE PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/BLACKDAY

SUBSCRIBE & STAY STRONG

Visit **strongfitnessmag.com/subscription** to subscribe and receive 6 issues of **STRONG Fitness Magazine** delivered to your door.

Available on the App Store | Available on Android | pocketmags.com

16 PERCENT BY WHICH HIGH **CONSUMPTION OF FISH WAS SHOWN TO REDUCE RISKS OF DEPRESSION** IN WOMEN.

Steak it to Heart

Want to boost your cardiovascular health? Eat more protein, says a new study from the University of East Anglia. Data collected from more than 2000 healthy women found that **those who ate the highest amounts of amino acids from animal- and plant-based protein had the lowest blood pressure and arterial stiffness, two factors in cardiovascular disease**. In fact, the effects of increased amino acid consumption on heart health were comparable to quitting smoking, reducing alcohol and salt intake, and exercising. The study authors concluded that a diet rich in protein from beef, poultry, and fish, as well as dairy, beans, legumes and spinach, could slash your risks of heart disease.

Are you getting TOO much protein? Flip to page 66 to find out.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Could a healthy diet be the key to a healthy mind? A recent scientific review by psychiatry experts says, definitely. The study, conducted by the International Society for Nutritional Psychiatry Research, highlights the importance of a diet high in Omega-3s, polyunsaturated fats, B-vitamins and other vitamins and minerals, for optimal brain function and mental health. The paper points specifically to the Mediterranean Diet, noting that it has been linked to improved cognitive function and a reduced risk of depression.

THE NEW BACON?

If you've ever wished bacon were as healthy as a vegetable, you may be in luck. Researchers at Oregon State University have stumbled upon a type of algae that tastes like bacon when cooked and has twice the nutrient power of kale. It's too early to predict if it will ever become a widely available product, but a marketing plan is in the works.

PHOTOGRAPHY PAUL BUCETA

Office Casualties

A new study by researchers from Harvard and Stanford universities is giving literal meaning to the term "worked to death." In a meta-analysis of over 228 studies on the impact of work stress on health, the study authors concluded that workplace stress is as damaging to our health as exposure to secondhand smoke, with employees in high-demand positions at a 50 percent greater risk of developing a medical condition than those that are not. The study also found that long work hours were linked to 20 percent greater risk of mortality than those who clocked normal hours.

CHAIR PHOTO PAUL BUCETA OIL PHOTO SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/CASTHER

FOR TIPS ON COMBATING WORK STRESS, FLIP TO PAGE 84.

23 PERCENTAGE BY WHICH **WORK STRESS INCREASES THE RISK OF HEART ATTACKS,** ACCORDING TO A 2012 BRITISH STUDY.

OIL CHANGE

With the coconut oil trend on the rise, many of us may be neglecting olive oil. But a recent study from Spain is putting this source of healthy fat and its proven health properties back in the spotlight. The study of more than 4200 women found breast cancer risk was reduced by 62 percent in those who followed a Mediterranean Diet, which included a high amount of extra virgin olive oil, over those who followed the same diet, but consumed mixed nuts instead of EVOO.

PILLOW SHOCK

How ya sleepin'? If you answered, "not great," you could be at risk for early signs of heart disease, says a recent Korean study highlighting the importance of sleep quality and quantity in heart health in both young and middle-aged adults. Analysis of coronary calcium found sleepers clocking less than five hours per night had 50 percent more calcium in their coronary arteries than those who got seven hours, while subjects who tossed and turned had 20 percent more than those who reported a good night's slumber. But the biggest wake up call? Those who reported sleeping more than nine hours had 70 percent more calcium buildup than the seven-hour group, suggesting you really can have too much of a good thing.

DEADLIFT FOR MORE D

IF YOU STRUGGLE WITH VITAMIN D DEFICIENCY, you may need to increase your gym sessions, not your supplement dosage. In a recent animal study published in *Experimental Physiology*, Japanese researchers discovered that resistance training (but not aerobic training) increased the number of vitamin D receptors in the muscle, improving vitamin D metabolism. While the research is in the preliminary stages, the findings suggest that resistance training may be an effective way to improve vitamin D metabolism without supplementation.

CRAVINGS KICKER?

Results of a new study published in the *Journal of the American College of Nutrition* may have the solution to your hunger cravings. When overweight and obese individuals consumed a single dose of a concentrated extract of thylakoids, a membrane found in spinach, they stayed full after eating for two hours longer than when they were given a placebo. No wonder Popeye was so lean!

Juicy News

Want longer workouts?

Consider taking juice—beet juice that is. A 2015 study published by the *American Journal of Physiology* found that when healthy male subjects drank 70 ml of nitrate-rich beet juice for 15 days, their blood vessels dilated more easily during exercise compared to those sipping the placebo. This increased flow of oxygen to the muscles and reduced the amount of work by the heart, allowing them to perform longer before tiring out. The study also revealed lower blood pressure and more dilated blood vessels at rest in addition to during exercise.

400

MILLIGRAMS OF SUPPLEMENTAL TURMERIC EXTRACT THREE TIMES PER DAY PROVIDES ANTI-INFLAMMATORY BENEFITS AND MAY HELP SPEED INJURY RECOVERY.

Drink Up!

Sip 6-8 oz of beet root juice 2-3 hours before your workout. Got a big race coming up? Chug it for a few days leading to the event.

PHOTOGRAPHY PAUL BUCETA

THE EVOLUTION OF PURE PERFORMANCE

ON SALE NOW

Kristine Andali

Athlete in the National Pro Grid League.

Top 10 Worldwide CrossFit Regional Competitor

CROSSFUEL - Pure Performance is formulated by Dr. Kevin Jardine, performance coach and advisor to many of the world's top athletes. Kevin created a line of supplements specifically engineered for high intensity, functional fitness.

Scientifically formulated to give you what your body needs to increase strength, speed and stamina. Everything you want and nothing you don't! Certified Banned Substance Free.

CROSSFUEL is natural, free of soy and impurities and engineered from the worlds finest ingredients — no artificial colours, flavours or sweeteners . . . Just Pure Performance.

Dr. Kevin Jardine Bsc.Kin, D.C., Med.Ac

Certified High Performance Coach
Crossfit level 1 Trainer

www.myCROSSFUEL.com

CROSSFUEL™
PURE PERFORMANCE

INFORMED-CHOICE.ORG Trusted by sport

» ZERO ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS
» ZERO ARTIFICIAL FLAVOURS
» ZERO ARTIFICIAL COLOURS

AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY AT GNC LIVE WELL

THE LOGOS AND OTHER MARKS ON THIS ADVERTISEMENT INCLUDING CROSSFUEL ARE PROTECTED BY TRADEMARK LAW AND MAY NOT BE USED WITHOUT WRITTEN CONSENT. © 2015 CROSSCOR INC., ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

HOW TO

Climb A Rope

YOUR EXPERT **Paul McIntyre**
CSEP-CPT, CrossFit Level 2, Owner of CrossFit Colosseum in Toronto, ON

Climbing to the top of a rope is a fitness benchmark for many physical challenge seekers. But what most who struggle with this functional exercise don't realize is that they've been doing it wrong for years. It is a common misconception that the rope climb is all about grip and upper body strength, when in fact, the movement is powered by your legs. When using a correct technique, such as the "Russian Wrap" demonstrated here, your arms and grip guide the force generated by your legs, making the top a more reachable goal.

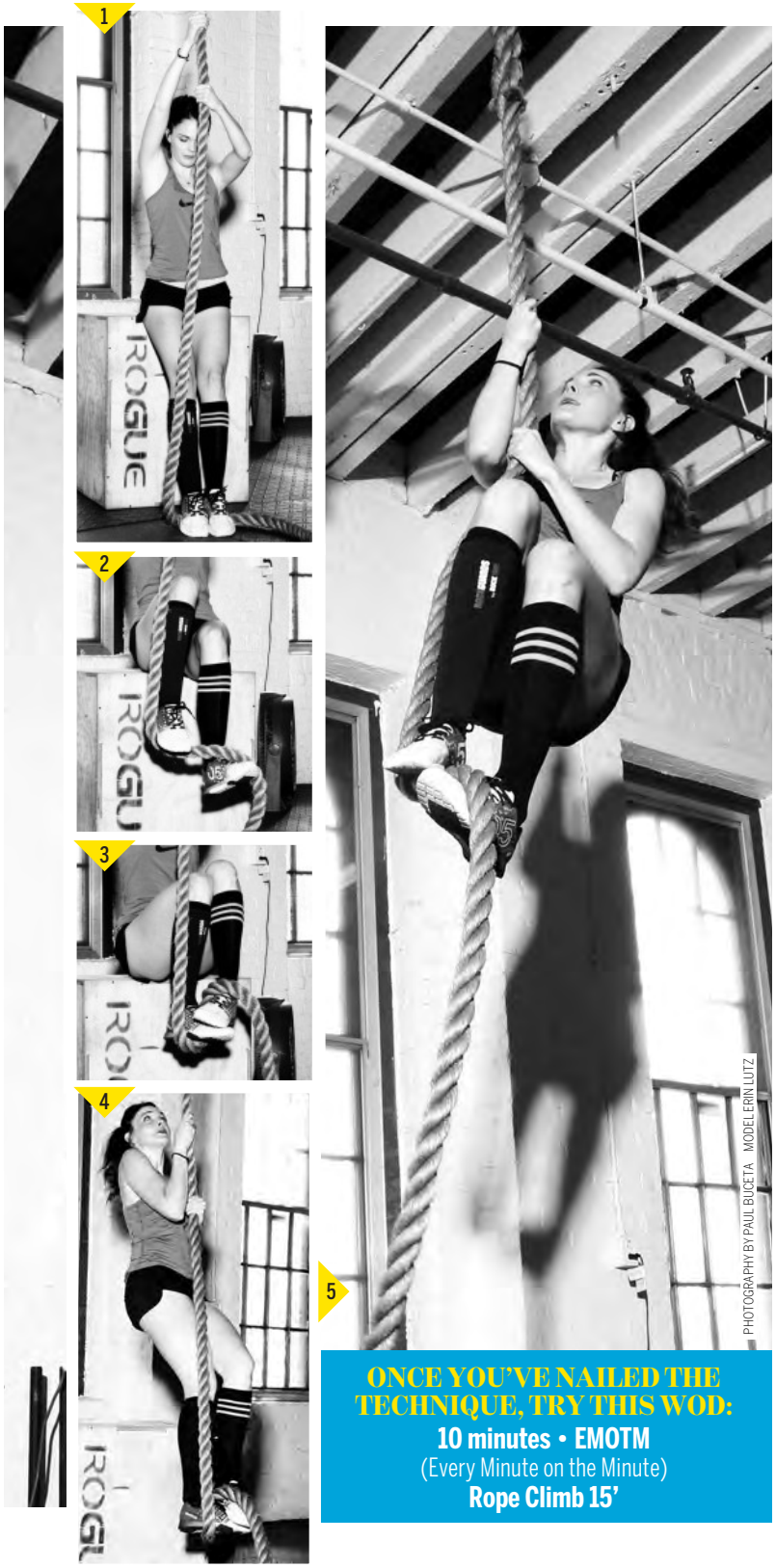
1. Begin by practicing this technique by sitting on a box. This will allow you the use of your feet and legs without worrying about stabilizing yourself.

2. Place the rope underneath your dominant foot (in this case, it's the right foot) as if you are stepping on it. Sweep the top of your other, non-dominant foot underneath the rope.

3. Using your non-dominant foot, push the rope into the arch of your dominant foot, placing the toe of the non-dominant foot on top of the other to secure the rope into position.

4. Still sitting on the box, grip the rope as high as you can. Lean your weight back and bring your knees to your chest. Now stand up. Your feet should not move and the rope shouldn't slip. Now have a friend move the box—this is very important to ensure safety. Move hand over hand until your arms and body are fully extended.

5. Keeping your body close to the rope, "jump" your knees up as high as you can (your feet will come unwrapped). Now use your feet to repeat steps 2-3 and rewrap them. Once secured, straighten your legs again, and move hand over hand until you are fully extended. Repeat all the way to the top.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL BUCETA MODEL ERIN LUTZ

GETTING DOWN

HOW TO: To descend, do not just slide down the rope; use control. Unlock your feet and move them apart, keeping the rope underneath your dominant foot and on top of your other foot. Slowly make your way to the ground. Rest and repeat steps 1-5.

ONCE YOU'VE NAILED THE TECHNIQUE, TRY THIS WOD:
10 minutes • EMOTM
(Every Minute on the Minute)
Rope Climb 15'

FITMISS

FITMISS | SAMANTHA LEETE

FITMISS IGNITE™

WOMEN'S PRE-WORKOUT + ENERGY BOOSTER

- INCREASED ENERGY & WORKOUT MOTIVATION*
- IGNITE FAT LOSS & BUILD A LEAN PHYSIQUE*
- GREAT TASTING & CONVENIENT*

Pre-workout energy drinks deliver a motivational boost. But most are designed for men. Designed for women, FitMiss Ignite™ supports converting fat into energy, improving endurance and promoting healthy body composition. It contains beta-alanine, natural amino acids like glycine and taurine backed up by the fat-burning power of L-carnitine.* This is FitMiss Ignite™.

STRONG IS THE NEW SEXY!®

AVAILABLE AT THESE RETAIL AND ONLINE OUTLETS

GNC LIVE WELL. theVitamin Shoppe. BODYBUILDING.COM Information. Motivation. Supplementation. VITAMIN WORLD POPEYE'S www.popeyescanada.com

DISTRIBUTED BY

EUROPA SPORTS PRODUCTS

30 MINUTES

POSTERIOR POWER

Develop stronger hamstrings and glutes with this unique lower body circuit routine.

ROUTINE BY **RITA CATOLINO, FITNESS MODEL, COACH & TRAINER**

LEAD PHOTO: MODEL BELLA FALCONI

Are your hamstrings feeling weaker than your quads?

If your lower body routine focuses on squats, lunges and leg extensions, the answer is probably, "yes!" In fact, most women tend to have strength imbalances in this area, with quads often being twice as strong as the hams. This can put extra pressure on your joints and leave you susceptible to knee and other injuries.

The following circuit can help improve these imbalances by strengthening the hamstrings as well as the lower back, core and glutes. It includes a variety of movements that work the anterior, lateral and posterior planes for an all-encompassing functional routine that sculpts those hams and glutes.

How to: Perform this circuit twice per week. Complete 15-20 reps of each movement before moving onto the next. Aim for 2-3 rounds, or 4-5 if you're more advanced.

EQUIPMENT: YOU'LL NEED A STABILITY BALL, RESISTANCE BAND, BARBELL AND AN INCLINE BENCH.

The Workout

EXERCISE	REPS
STIFF-LEGGED DEADLIFT WITH REACH	15-20
RESISTANCE BAND DONKEY KICK-BACKS	
BAND SQUAT WITH LATERAL LEG LIFT	
SB HIP THRUST	
SB ROLL WITH GLUTE BRIDGE	
Advanced Move: REVERSE SB HYPEREXTENSION	

PHOTOGRAPHY: PAUL BUCETA MODEL: RITA CATOLINO HAIR & MAKEUP: ALEXANDRA SMITH

1. Stiff-Legged Deadlift with Reach

SET UP: Stand holding an unloaded barbell in front of your thighs, with legs straight but not locked, and with a neutral spine **(A)**.

ACTION: Hinge at the hips and lower the barbell towards the floor, stopping at your ankles **(B)**. At the bottom of the movement, push your hips back slightly and reach forward with the bar to create even more of a "stretch" through the hamstrings **(C)**. Hold for 1 second, then raise back up to standing. Repeat.

4. SB Hip Thrust

SET UP: Sit with your back against a stability ball with knees bent. Hold an unloaded barbell across your hips **(A)**.

ACTION: Press into your heels and raise your hips until your thighs are parallel with the floor **(B)**. Hold for 2-3 seconds, squeezing your glutes, then lower. Repeat.

This routine does wonders for your posture! Flip to page 60 for more tips.

5. SB Roll with Glute Bridge

SET UP: Lie on your back and place your feet on a stability ball with legs extended **(A)**.

ACTION: Bend your knees and pull the ball in towards your body, recruiting the hamstrings **(B)**. At the top of the movement, press your heels into the ball and raise your hips towards the ceiling **(C)**. Hold for 4 seconds, then lower your hips and extend your legs to return to the starting position. Repeat.

2. Resistance Band Donkey Kick-Backs

SET UP: Begin on your hands and knees on the ground holding an end of a resistance band in each hand. Hook one foot in the loop created in the band with a flexed foot.

ACTION: Extend your leg straight out behind you. Hold for 1 second, then bend your knee and return your leg to the starting position. Complete all reps then repeat on the other side.

3. Band Squat with Lateral Leg Lift

SET UP: Stand with both feet on a resistance band and hold one end in each hand.

ACTION: Bend your knees and perform a single squat **(A)**. Before reaching the top of the movement, lift one leg out to the side **(B)**. Lower, and return to a squat, then repeat on the other side. Continue alternating for all reps.

Reverse SB Hyperextension

SET UP: Adjust an incline bench to 45 degrees. Place a stability ball between your feet and lie with your torso against the upright part of the bench, facing the seat.

ACTION: With flexed feet, squeeze the ball and raise your legs in the air until your heels are in line with your head. Hold for 3 seconds, then lower. Repeat.

RECIPE BY **JENN PIKE, REGISTERED HOLISTIC NUTRITIONIST**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **DAVE LAUS**

Bowl of Energy

Your body is a machine. And when it comes to performance—whether in the gym or your daily life—how you fuel up is everything; if one component is missing, you can't fire on all cylinders. So when it's time to fill the tank, this super salad is like going for premium. Crammed with nutrients to keep your energy levels steady, it also provides a muscle-building punch of plant-based protein. Ladies, start your engines.

ADD ½ CUP OF SAUERKRAUT TO AMP UP THE DIGESTIVE AND IMMUNE HEALTH BENEFITS!

ENERGIZING GODDESS BOWL

PREP TIME: 20 MIN • **TOTAL TIME:** 35 MIN • **MAKES** 3 SERVINGS

- 1-2 cups of quinoa or brown rice
- ½ head of broccoli, chopped
- 2 large carrots, sliced
- 1 tsp coconut oil or olive oil (for sautéeing)
- 2-3 handfuls of baby kale, chard or spinach
- 1 cup chickpeas or black beans, rinsed well
- ¼ cup leek, thinly sliced
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 Tbsp each: hemp seeds, raw sunflower and pumpkin seeds
- 1 avocado, cubed
- ½ cup pitted kalamata olives
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley

DRESSING

- ¼ cup water
- ¼ cup apple cider vinegar
- 2 tsp sea salt
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- ¾ tsp fresh ground pepper
- ¾ tsp tamari
- ¼ tsp organic sugar
- ¼ tsp mustard powder or tsp of Dijon mustard
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- ¾ cup sunflower oil
- ¼ cup flax oil

1. Cook rice or quinoa according to package instructions. Meanwhile, gently steam broccoli and carrots in a steam basket until al dente. Set aside to cool.

2. Heat coconut oil or olive oil and crushed garlic over medium heat in a pan. Lightly sauté greens and leeks until wilted, but do not overcook.

3. In a blender, puree all dressing ingredients except the oils. While the blender is running, slowly add the oils in until all is combined well.

4. In a large bowl, layer your salad: Begin with a scoop of grains, then add beans, sautéed greens and leek mixture, and steamed veggies. Top with olives, avocado and seeds. Drizzle with 1.5 Tbsp of dressing and let stand for approximately 5 minutes. Sprinkle with fresh parsley and serve.

NUTRIENTS PER SERVING:
Calories: 550, **Fat:** 34 g, **Carbs:** 52 g, **Protein:** 14 g, **Fiber:** 13 g

Premium Essentials by NOVAFORME™

RAW NUTRITION • PURE SOURCE

EAT CLEAN • BE STRONG

The Ultimate Superfood for Optimal Health*

Studies have shown that the benefits of Spirulina may include increased fat burning, improved physical endurance and lowered cholesterol, to name just a few. It is a whole food and is in its natural state. Spirulina is a natural detoxifier that may help to cleanse the body of heavy metals.*

- Antioxidant Protection*
- Nutrient-Rich Green Superfood*
- Nature's Pure Multi-Vitamin*

USDA ORGANIC

100% Pure Organic Wheat Grass Goodness*

Considered one of the most nutrient-dense leafy greens available, Wheat Grass gives you an antioxidant packed boost that alkalizes and energizes with every serving. Wheat Grass is a great source of dark-green Chlorophyll containing raw, whole-food-source vitamins and minerals.*

- 100% Pure Wheat Grass
- 1 Serving = 7 Shots of Fresh Wheat Grass Juice!
- Sustained Energy & Detoxification*

USDA ORGANIC

NOVA FORME®

Available at: BPN BEST PRICE NUTRITION · LuckyVitamin · Vitacost

2015 HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

TWO CHICKS TIP: Clean your brushes every 1-2 weeks to avoid product build up.

Give Gorgeous!

Our beauty experts' top picks for gifting a little glam to the fitness lover in your life.

WRITTEN BY **LORI FABRIZIO AND VALERIA NOVA, BEAUTY EXPERTS AND FOUNDERS OF TWO CHICKS & SOME LIPSTICK**

Party season is finally here!

Time for fit women everywhere to shed their sweats and rock those LBDs that show off the year's hard work. And there's no better way to go from gym to glam than with these products straight from our beauty experts' wish lists.

1/ Revlon Colorburst Balm
Available in three different finishes (like this red matte) and a range of party-perfect shades, these chubby pencils are infused with silky shea and coconut butters to leave your lips mistletoe ready.
$9.50; ulta.com

2/ Urban Decay 24/7 Glide On Eye Pencil
These pencils are a Two Chicks must-have for long-lasting, gorgeous color and smooth application!
$20; urbandecay.com

3/ Anastasia Beverly Hills Perfect Brow Pencil
There's a perfect shade for every hair color, plus the built in spoolie makes keeping your brows on point oh-so-easy.
$23; anastasiabeverlyhills.com

PHOTOS PAUL BUCETA

Follow Two Chicks on Instagram for more tips and tricks.

@TWOCHICKSANDSOMELIPSTICK

4/ Sephora Tools of the Trade Brush Set
Every woman needs a solid set of makeup brush staples! This starter set makes makeup application quick and easy. **$62; sephora.com**

5/ FLOWER Lighten Up! Brightening Concealer
A lightweight concealer that instantly brightens and hydrates. We love that its quality is comparable to high-end highlighters, and leaves you looking luminous. **$8; walmart.com**

6/ Tweak-d Restore Self Cleansing Hair Treatment
The only hair product you'll ever need! This 5-in-1 foam treats, cleanses, conditions and detangles hair while adding shine. A busy girl's dream come true! **$29; HSN.com**

7/ L'Oreal Paris Infallible Makeup Extender Setting Spray
This magical mist keeps your makeup looking fresh all night long. Spritz on to finish your look and prevent fading and smudging. **$14; walmart.com**

8/ Clarins Paris Radiance-Plus Golden Glow Booster
Hit your holiday bash with a sun-kissed glow, sans tanning bed. Add a few drops to your night cream and wake up with a natural-looking tan. **$30; clarinsusa.com**

9/ Too Faced Better Than Sex Mascara
Our favourite mascara of the year! Ultra black and incredibly volumizing, this baby adds definition and drama to every single lash. **$23; toofaced.com**

10/ Batiste Dry Shampoo
Keep a bottle of this dry shampoo in your bag for a quick and convenient way to revitalize hair after a workout or midway through the party. It gets rid of oil and adds sexy volume. **$8; ulta.com**

Going for Gold

How a two-time Olympic medalist trains physically and mentally to secure her spot on the track in Rio.

WRITTEN BY **WIL SHELTON** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **TAM LAM OF CLAY MEDIA**

AMERICAN HURDLER

Dawn Harper Nelson has tasted victory more than once. In 2008, she won the Olympic gold medal in the 100-meter hurdles in Beijing, then four years later, brought home the silver medal from London. And now, with the 2016 Summer Games in Brazil just on the horizon, that familiar hunger has returned, and she won't stop until she's satisfied, and standing on top of the podium.

FAST LEARNER

Dawn's athleticism was apparent at a young age. With the help of her coaches, she developed undeniable talent throughout her childhood. Her earliest achievement was sprinting, but later, Dawn's coach convinced her to pursue—and master—one specific skill. "After years of practice with my coach guiding me, we discovered that I had a real natural talent for hurdling," she says. In high school, Dawn began to redefine herself through the sport, and in her freshman year, she won her first state championship and broke the Illinois State record for the 100-meter hurdles with a time of 14.03 seconds.

THE MENTAL GAME

Athletics, according to Dawn, is a scenario of mind over matter and mastering the self. "I've always been willing to accept all of the mental challenges that come along with the end goal," she says. At times, exploding out of the mental blocks can be more difficult than the starting blocks, but Dawn doesn't break her focus. "When you're hurdling in the right way, it's poetry in motion. [That's when] I get to a point in the race where I feel unstoppable."

OFF THE TRACK

Dawn's exclusive off-the-track training schedule is organized and effective. Dawn hits the weight room four days a week and practices yoga to relieve tightness on Fridays. Dawn notes there is a specific need to maintain a regimen of continuous stretching, both pre- and post-training.
In the gym, she performs sled pulls to enhance the drive phase of her race. She incorporates an extensive amount of squats and leg presses to strengthen her VMO muscles and quads, and increase her power. As Dawn's career began to thrive, she embraced more hamstring exercises such as deadlifts and plyometrics. She notes that such a routine has made her a stronger, faster champion. "Every exercise is focused on running down a straight line."

OLYMPIC DREAMS

Right now, Dawn's sights are firmly set on making her third Olympic team in 2016. She embraces the challenge, and only focuses on the win. "What keeps me motivated is still working to perfect my race."

Dawn's Details

AGE: 31
HOMETOWN: East St. Louis, Illinois
HEIGHT: 5'6
WEIGHT: 134 lbs
CAREER HIGHLIGHTS: 2008 Olympic gold, 2012 Olympic silver in 100-meter hurdles

Fun Fact:

Dawn Harper Nelson is the first American 100-meter hurdler to ever win gold at an Olympics, and medal in the following Olympics.

THE **BEST TASTING** PLANT BASED PROTEIN.

PERIOD!

This highly nutritious and delicious whole food shake provides you with **26 vitamins & minerals** along with **16 grams of 100% plant-based protein**, **1.5 grams of Omega-3 oil**, **2 servings of fruits & vegetables**, **4 grams of fiber**, **and 1 billion probiotics**.

25% OFF

FOR STRONG FITNESS MAGAZINE READERS ONLY

USE DISCOUNT CODE

STRONG25

ONLINE AT MYVEGANPURE.COM

Making Her Mark

How ballet dancer-turned-fitness pro Emilie Provencher broke into the industry, and never looked back.

WRITTEN BY **KIRSTYN BROWN, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **PAUL BUCETA**

MODEL EMILIE PROVENCHER
HAIR & MAKEUP SARAH SCOTFORD

Emilie Provencher began learning ballet almost as early as she learned to walk.
By 11 years old she was living what many little girls dream of, dancing at a professional ballet school in Montreal, Quebec. But despite her natural talent and grace, her heart led her down a different path. Today, the 31-year-old is living and breathing a life of fitness: she is a published model, a sponsored athlete, a seasoned competitor, and co-owner of a supplements store and private training studio. And while changing courses didn't come easy, there's no question, she doesn't have a single regret.

SFM: When did you first start dancing?

EP: I started ballet at the age of three. When I was 11, my professor Marie-Hélène believed in my potential and helped me audition for the professional ballet school in Montreal. I was admitted into the school and left home to live this incredible experience. I lived with a family that took in ballerinas, and I stayed until the end of my high school.

SFM: What was it like to be in that world at such a young age?

EP: I was living a dream but it was very hard work day after day. I had to learn discipline, posture, stretching, and self-control. There were no excuses. But I fell in love with performing on stage and practiced for hours a day for shows. Everything had to be there: endurance, proprioception, musicality, movement, and precision. The majority of assets I possess as a fitness model today, I owe to those years of learning.

SFM: Have you always had an athletic build?

EP: For a ballet dancer, I was always too muscular. I was strong and tiny but had big quads and calves. To be a typical ballerina I had to lose muscle mass in my legs, which was frustrating for me because at that time I thought it meant losing weight. Later, when I discovered fitness and started to become more educated, I understood that it was simply impossible to change

"My heart swung wildly between my passions for dance and for fitness."

Dancing Queen: Emilie's experience in dance and performing gives her a competitive edge on the fitness stage.

"At that moment, I started to be really proud and comfortable with the gift nature gave me."

Emilie's *Advice*

Looking to break into the fitness industry? Follow these words of wisdom from our cover athlete.

1. Never stop being who you are. Be unique and put the emphasis on your strength.
2. Surround yourself with people who believe in you, during both your successful and difficult moments.
3. Stay humble and have fun.
4. Find a coach you trust and stay with that person. You can go far with a real and long term professional relationship.
5. Think, train, talk and cook like an athlete. Do not diet or feel like you are deprived. Remember you are an incredible machine who needs the right fuel to perform.
6. Don't be afraid to be ambitious.
7. Don't let people put you down, even if that person plays an important role in the industry.

my body the way they wanted me to. At that moment, I started to be really proud and comfortable with the gift nature gave me.

SFM: Why did you leave dance?

EP: In my late teens my heart swung wildly between my passion for dance and the fitness lifestyle. I needed both to feel complete and happy. Before leaving dance completely, I had returned to school to become a physical therapist. I was also a personal trainer. So fitness felt like the natural and logical path to take for me.

SFM: How long until you started competing?

EP: I didn't enter my first show until I was 28 years old. I was ready to begin the process for a long time but for a few reasons, I had decided to wait. But deep down I was sure it was my way. I was so focused on that goal. Becoming a fitness model was not just a dream in my head, but the thing I was made for.

SFM: When was your first show?

EP: I decided to compete in 2012, but a few weeks before the show I found out I was pregnant with my beautiful Mia! So my first show didn't happen until after my delivery in June 2013, on the SAF (Serious About Fitness) stage where I won first place in the Fitness Model category. It was the beginning of an extraordinary adventure.

SFM: What hardships did you face to get where you are?

EP: Starting after my pregnancy, I can tell you, making your mark in the industry is not an easy thing. It's hard to prove to the judges, photographers, president of a company, that you are there to stay, and convince them they have to choose you.

SFM: What are your goals for 2016?

EP: I will continue to compete with SAF and work on my business as an athlete and a coach. I love helping women to change their lifestyle, lose weight, boost their energy and for some, step on stage proudly.

BEYOND THE SQUAT

Great butts aren't just made at the squat rack.

Yes, dropping it low plays a major role in lifting and strengthening the glutes, but for cover athlete Emilie, sculpting a shapely backside means going the extra mile, like in her booty burning routine on the following pages.

Mind-muscle connection and isometric holds are the keys to this routine's effectiveness. That means for each exercise, you will be holding the top of the movement for two counts, and focusing on contracting the working muscles for extra glute recruitment. You won't need a Smith machine or heavy barbell for this workout—just some simple equipment and a lot of mental toughness.

THE WORKOUT

HOW TO: Perform 3 sets of 10 reps (per side) of each exercise. It is important that you hold the isometric (top) portion of each movement for 2 whole counts, then return to the starting position with control.

"When you concentrate on the right muscle, your body learns to make that connection faster"

FROG KICK

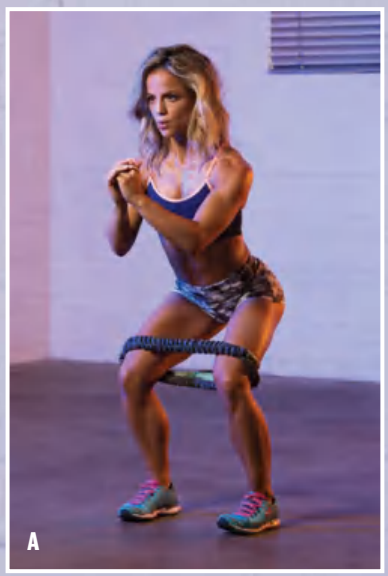
SET UP: Lie face down on a mat on the floor. Bend your knees 90 degrees so the soles of your feet face the ceiling. Bring your heels together.

ACTION: Squeeze your glutes and raise your quads off the ground. Hold, then slowly lower back down and repeat.

RESISTANCE BAND LATERAL SHUFFLE

SET UP: Wrap a resistance band around your legs just above your knees, and stand with feet hip-width apart. Bend your knees slightly and lower into a semi-squat.

ACTION: Staying in the semi-squat position, step one foot to the side, hold, then step in the same direction with the other foot. Hold, then repeat in the opposite direction. Continue "shuffling" back and forth for all reps.



BB CROSSOVER LUNGE (PG. 50)

SET UP: Place a barbell across your upper back and stand with feet hip-width apart.

ACTION: Step one foot behind the other. Bend both knees and lower until your front thigh is parallel with the floor. Hold, then push off your back foot to return to the starting position, then repeat on the other side. Continue alternating sides for all reps.

BB CROSSOVER LUNGE

WHY THE ISOMETRIC HOLD?

"Holding the contraction really puts the emphasis on the muscle you want to work."

"Think, train, talk and cook like an athlete. You are an incredible machine."

RESISTANCE BAND SQUAT

SET UP: Wrap a resistance band around your legs just above your knees, and stand with feet wide enough apart to create resistance in the band (about shoulder-width).

ACTION: Bend your knees and lower your hips until your thighs are parallel to the floor. Hold, press through your heels and extend your legs to come up to standing. for all reps.

ASSISTED PISTOL SQUAT

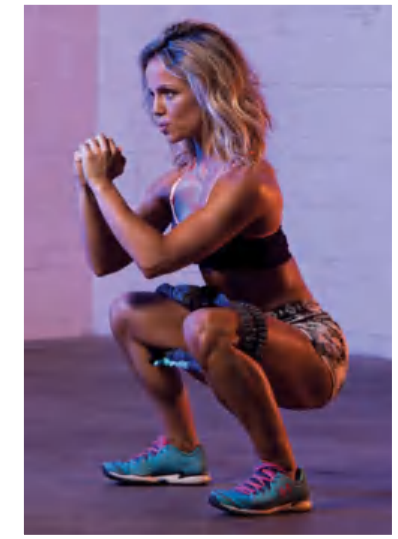
SET UP: Stand sideways to a chair and hold it for support. Shift your weight into one leg, lifting the other off the ground and hold it slightly out in front of you. **(A)**

ACTION: Bend your supporting knee and lower your hips into a deep squat, keeping your free leg straight in front of you **(B)**. Hold, then straighten your bent leg and return to standing, and repeat. Complete all reps, then repeat on the other side.

DB SLIDING SIDE LUNGE

SET UP: Hold a pair of dumbbells and stand with one foot on a gliding disc out to the side.

ACTION: Bend your supporting leg and let your opposite foot slide out to the side as you lower into a deep lunge. Hold, then straighten your supporting leg, and slide your opposite foot back in as you return to standing. Complete all reps, then repeat on the other side.



DB SLIDING SIDE LUNGE

SLIDING GLUTE BRIDGE

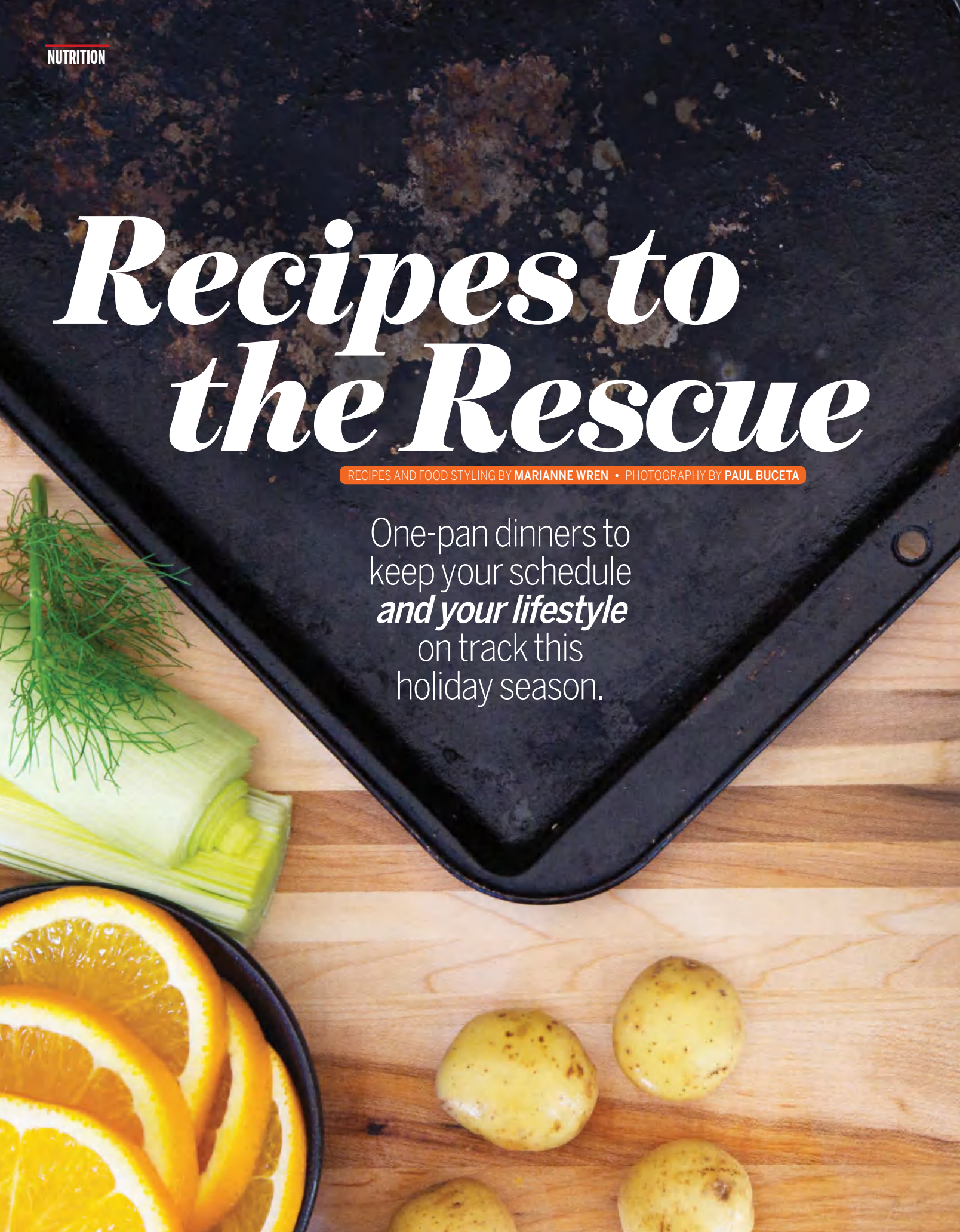
SET UP: Lie on your back on the floor with your legs straight. Place your heels on top of gliding discs.

ACTION: Simultaneously raise your hips and bend your knees as you slide your heels towards your butt. Hold, then slowly extend your legs and lower back down. Repeat. S

Recipes to the Rescue

RECIPES AND FOOD STYLING BY **MARIANNE WREN** • PHOTOGRAPHY BY **PAUL BUCETA**

One-pan dinners to keep your schedule ***and your lifestyle*** on track this holiday season.



LET'S BE REAL:

The threat of holiday weight gain crosses all of our minds this time of year. The office parties, the gift baskets, the family feasts, the mid-shopping lunch breaks— it can be a recipe for disaster for even the most dedicated healthy eater.

But the trick to staying on track from November to January isn't avoiding the festive fun or adding an extra hour of cardio to your daily routine. What you need is a bullet-proof game plan for staying fueled and focused; one that includes a fully stocked fridge with nutritious eats, and a few easy recipes in your back pocket.

These one-dish roasted dinners let you whip up a healthy homecooked meal even when your schedule is packed, and provide delicious leftovers for the next day. That means no showing up to the party on an empty stomach and no binging on the office goodies. Each dish can be paired perfectly with rice, quinoa or a big green salad, but are equally as satisfying on their own. And since they only require one pan, you'll spend less time cleaning up and more time making merry. ▸

Don't skip dessert! Go to strongfitnessmag.com for healthy treat ideas.

ROASTED HALIBUT WITH FENNEL, BLACK OLIVES & ORANGES

PREP TIME: 10 MIN * **TOTAL TIME:** 40 MIN
MAKES 4 SERVINGS

- 1 large bulb fennel
- 2 leeks
- 2 medium navel oranges
- 12 pitted Kalamata olives
- 4 4-oz halibut filets, skin removed
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- ¾ tsp fine sea salt, divided
- ½ tsp freshly ground pepper, divided
- 1 tsp fennel seeds

1. Preheat oven to 425° F with the racks arranged in the middle of the oven. Spray a large rimmed baking sheet (13x18 inches) with cooking spray.
2. Lay fennel on its side on a cutting board. Using a sharp knife trim away stalks and root-end and discard. Cut the fennel in half and remove core, then slice thinly into ¼ inch thick slices. Arrange fennel on prepared baking sheet.
3. Trim away dark green tops of the leeks and root-end and discard. Slice leeks in half lengthwise and clean under warm running water to remove any dirt. Return leeks to cutting board and slice crosswise into 2 inch lengths. Arrange on baking sheet with fennel.
4. Using a sharp knife trim away the peel and white membrane from one of the oranges. Slice into ¼ inch thick rounds and arrange on baking sheet with fennel. Juice second orange.
5. Flatten olives with the side of a large chef's knife to crack them open slightly and place on baking sheet. Drizzle 1 Tbsp of olive oil over the vegetables and sprinkle with half the salt, pepper and fennel seeds. Bake in oven for 10 minutes.
6. Remove baking sheet from oven and place fish filets over veggies. Drizzle with remaining Tbsp of olive oil, and remaining salt, pepper and fennel seeds. Return baking sheet to oven and continue cooking until fish is opaque and flakes easily with a fork, and fennel is beginning to brown, about 10-13 minutes. Remove from oven and drizzle with reserved orange juice.

NUTRIENTS PER SERVING:
Calories: 269, **Fat:** 11 g, **Carbs:** 17 g
Protein: 25 g, **Fiber:** 4 g

Buy a whole chicken from the butcher and have them portion it for you.

DECONSTRUCTED **ROAST CHICKEN** WITH CAULIFLOWER & BEETS

PREP TIME: 15 MIN * **TOTAL TIME:** 1 HR * **MAKES** 8 SERVINGS

- 1 small head cauliflower, leaves trimmed and separated into large florets
- 4 large golden beets, peeled and cut into ½ inch wedges
- 1.5 lbs bone in, skin on chicken breasts (2 large chicken breast halves)
- 1.5 lbs bone in, skin on chicken thighs (4 large thighs)
- 2 Tbsp olive oil, divided
- 1 large lemon, cut into ½ inch wedges
- 1 tsp dried thyme leaves
- ½ tsp ground sage
- ½ tsp sea salt
- ½ tsp pepper

NUTRIENTS PER SERVING:
Calories: 306, **Fat:** 21 g, **Carbs:** 9 g, **Protein:** 21 g, **Fiber:** 4 g

1. Preheat oven to 400° F. Spray a large rimmed baking sheet (13x18 inches) with non-stick cooking spray.
2. Place cauliflower and beets on baking sheet and drizzle with 1 ½ Tbsp olive oil.
3. Brush the skin of the chicken with remaining ½ Tbsp oil. Sprinkle with salt, pepper, sage, and thyme, dividing evenly. Arrange chicken on baking sheet with cauliflower and beets. Place lemon wedges around chicken.
4. Place in preheated oven and bake 35-45 minutes, or until chicken is golden and no longer pink inside (a thermometer inserted into the thickest part should register 155° F) and vegetables are browned. ▶

MAPLE GLAZED **TURKEY BREAST** WITH PARSNIPS, TRI-COLOR CARROTS & WILTED BABY KALE

PREP TIME: 15 MIN * **TOTAL TIME:** 45 MIN (PLUS RESTING TIME) * **MAKES** 4 SERVINGS

- ¼ cup pure maple syrup
- ½ tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- ½ tsp ground black pepper, divided
- ½ tsp fine sea salt, divided
- 1 pound boneless, skinless turkey breast
- 2 large parsnips, scrubbed well and cut into 4 inch long batons
- 1 bunch baby tri-color carrots, washed, greens removed and sliced in half, or quarters if large
- 1 ½ Tbsp olive oil
- 2 cups loosely packed baby kale

1. Preheat oven to 400° F with the rack in the middle of the oven. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. In a small bowl combine maple syrup, paprika, oregano and ¼ tsp each of salt and pepper. Place turkey breast on the baking sheet and brush with ½ the maple syrup mixture.
3. In a large bowl toss carrots and parsnips with olive oil and remaining ¼ tsp of salt and pepper. Arrange vegetables around the turkey breast.
4. Place baking sheet in the preheated oven and bake 20 minutes. Remove baking sheet from oven and baste turkey with remaining maple syrup mixture. Return baking sheet to oven. Continue to bake an additional 12-15 minutes until a thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the turkey registers 155° F and the veggies are golden brown.
5. Place turkey onto cutting board and allow to rest 5-7 minutes before slicing diagonally across the grain into 8 slices. Meanwhile, place baby greens on top of carrots and parsnips and toss gently with tongs to wilt. Serve with sliced turkey.

NUTRIENTS PER SERVING:
Calories: 335, **Fat:** 8 g, **Carbs:** 38 g
Protein: 29 g, **Fiber:** 7 g

HORSERADISH & MUSTARD CRUSTED **FLANK STEAK**

PREP TIME: 15 MIN * **TOTAL TIME:** 45 MIN (FOR MEDIUM RARE) * **MAKES** 6 SERVINGS

- 1 Tbsp prepared horseradish
- 2 Tbsp grainy Dijon mustard
- 2 tsp balsamic vinegar
- ¾ tsp ground black pepper, divided
- ¾ tsp fine sea salt, divided
- 1 ½ lb flank steak, trimmed
- 16 mini potatoes, halved (weighs 12 oz)
- 6 oz pearl onions, peeled and halved (9-10 onions)
- 2 Tbsp olive oil, divided
- 2 medium yellow squash, sliced into 1 inch thick half moons

1. Preheat oven to 400° F. Spray a large baking sheet with non-stick spray. Arrange oven rack in upper third of the oven.

2. In a small bowl combine mustard, horseradish, vinegar and ¼ tsp each of salt and pepper. Spread mixture over both sides of the flank steak and set aside.

3. In a large bowl toss potatoes, onions, ¼ tsp each of salt and pepper, and 1 ½ Tbsp of oil. Arrange cut-side down on baking sheet and bake 15 minutes.

4. Meanwhile, toss squash with remaining olive oil, salt and pepper. Add squash to baking sheet and cook 8-10 minutes. Remove vegetables and keep warm.

5. Preheat broiler on high. Place steak on baking sheet and broil with oven door open for 5-7 minutes per side, turning once, for medium rare (10-14 minutes total), or until thermometer registers 130° F when inserted into the thickest part. Remove steak to a cutting board and tent with foil. Allow to rest another 5-7 minutes. Slice thinly and serve with onions and squash. S

NUTRIENTS PER SERVING:
Calories: 304, **Fat:** 14 g, **Carbs:** 17 g, **Protein:** 27 g, **Fiber:** 3 g

Slicing the meat across the grain (width) makes it more tender.

THERE ARE **NO SUBSTITUTES**

ISOFLEX®

INDEPENDENT 3RD PARTY TESTED
TESTED FREE FROM BANNED SUBSTANCES

INFORMED-CHOICE.ORG
Trusted by sport

ISOFLEX Whey Protein Isolate stakes its claim as the Last Word in High Performance Nutrition.

With zero grams fat, zero grams sugar and just 1 gram of carbs, ISOFLEX has been the Choice of Champions for years. ISOFLEX has an amazing 27 grams of bioactive Whey Protein Isolate with a naturally high concentration of BCAAs and glutamine. ISOFLEX has an exclusive CTP™ (Cold Temperature Process) Micro-Filtration process that ensures bioactive whey fractions, like α-lactalbumin and immunoglobins are fully intact. The bioactive chart on every label tells you the percentages of each whey fraction and is a hallmark of whey protein quality.

ISOFLEX is 100% WADA compliant and certified banned-substance free by HFL laboratories via Informed Choice. ISOFLEX is over 99% lactose-free, 3rd party tested Gluten-Free and 100% Aspartame-free.

Available at:

Bodybuilding.com · Healthy Planet · Popeyes Supplements · Your Good Health · nutrition house · Fitshop.ca · Supplement King · BPN Best Price Nutrition · Superstore · GNC Live Well · Supplement Source · vitamart · SVNCanada.com

PROS *WHO DEPEND ON THEIR* **RESULTS**

DEPEND *ON* ISOFLEX

TEAM ALLMAX
AINSLEY MCSORLEY
FITNESS MODEL

- **Ultra-High Quality Whey Protein Isolate**
- **27 g Protein, 0 g Sugar, 0 g Fat**
- **8 Delicious Flavours**

ISOFLEX Whey Protein Isolate mixes easily, even with a fork – tastes great and comes in eight mouth-watering flavors. While athletes often consume between feeding, many opt to take ISOFLEX post-workout for rapid recovery and lean-tissue maintenance. It's no wonder pros from all manner of sports and competitions have made ISOFLEX their go to Whey Protein Isolate; ISOFLEX just makes sense.

Available in 8 Delicious Flavours!

- CHOCOLATE
- PEANUT BUTTER CHOCOLATE
- VANILLA
- STRAWBERRY
- CITRUS FRUIT PUNCH
- ARCTIC ORANGE MILKSHAKE
- CHOCOLATE MINT SUPREME
- BANANA CRÈME SUPREME

ALLMAX®

PROFESSIONAL GRADE SUPPLEMENTS

Want to end 2015 with a bang? This six-week program will crank up your metabolism and burn fat so you can make the new year your fittest yet.

Hit Your Goals

ROUTINE BY **JOE ARKO, STRENGTH & CONDITIONING COACH** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **PAUL BUCETA**

MODEL TASHA STAR SHOT ON LOCATION AT EPC BURLINGTON HAIR & MAKEUP ALEXANDRA SMITH

IF YOU'VE BEEN FOLLOWING THE MUSCLE-BUILDING PROGRAM IN OUR LAST ISSUE,

then by now your biceps are a little bigger, your glutes are shapelier and your abs are stronger than when you started two months ago. So give yourself a pat on the traps for all of your hard work.

Now it's time to show off what you've built; to strip off the extra layer and reveal the sweeping hamstrings and sculpted abs underneath, not to mention improve your overall body composition and health. Enter phase two of your transformation: Fat Loss. ▸

HOW IT WORKS

Whether you completed the two-month muscle-building plan and are looking to get more shredded, or you're just joining in and want to shed a few unwanted holiday pounds, this program will be effective in launching you closer to your goals, thanks to high intensity interval training (HIIT). Some days you will be doing HIIT, others you will be doing weight training circuits with very specific cardio intervals, creating a lethal combination for body fat without compromising your hard-earned muscle.

THE GOAL OF FAT-BURNING WORKOUTS IS TO:

- Force free fatty acids into the bloodstream to be used as a source of fuel instead of using stored sugars.
- Burn calories long after your workout is done, a.k.a EPOC (Excess Post-Oxygen Consumption).
- Enhance post-workout nutrient uptake, enabling your body to store nutrients in your muscle and liver instead of storing fat.
- Release fat burning chemicals, such as growth hormone and "catecholamines."

WHAT IT IS

Over the next 6-8 weeks, your fitness routine will include:

3 DAYS OF METABOLIC CONDITIONING

These high intensity circuit workouts burn through your sugar stores and maintain your strength and muscle, while igniting the fat burning response (ie. releasing free fatty acids into your bloodstream).

STEADY STATE CARDIO

After your metabolic conditioning workouts, you will perform 15-30 minutes of low intensity, steady state cardio to burn up the free fatty acids floating around in the bloodstream. As a rule, the intensity should be low enough that you could maintain a conversation. You should not be panting or having difficulty breathing.

2 DAYS OF HYBRID HIIT CONDITIONING WORKOUTS

Hybrid HIIT Conditioning is a twist on traditional intervals. This process involves high intensity intervals followed by a short rest and then steady state cardio. The point is to avoid a process called "re-esterification," which occurs when free fatty acids that do not get used as energy are re-stored as fat in the body.

YOUR HYBRID HIIT PROTOCOL

Follow these 3 steps on hybrid HIIT days:

1. Perform high intensity intervals for 10 minutes:
- 30 seconds on: highest intensity possible
- 30 seconds off: rest
- Repeat 10 times

2. Step off the machine and rest completely for 5 minutes

3. Perform 30 minutes of steady state cardio:
- Keep your heart rate at 130-140 BPM

CATECHOLAMINES are "fight-or-flight" hormones released by the adrenal glands in response to stress, such as high intensity intervals. Part of the sympathetic nervous system, they force the release of free fatty acids into the bloodstream to be used for energy.

SPIDERMAN PUSH-UP

HOW TO: FOLLOW THIS FIVE-DAY PROGRAM FOR AT LEAST SIX WEEKS (EIGHT IF NEEDED), ALONG WITH A HEALTHY NUTRITION PLAN TO BURN EXTRA FAT. ON HYBRID HIIT DAYS FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS ON PG 52.

THE PROGRAM

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Workout 1 + Steady State Cardio	**Hybrid HIIT** (on page 52)	**Workout 2** + Steady State Cardio	**Hybrid HIIT**	**Workout 3** + Steady State Cardio	**Active Recovery** (walking, hiking, yoga, light activity or sports)	**Rest**

WORKOUT ONE

CIRCUIT A	REPS
*One-Arm DB Press	8-10
Plate Raise	10-12
*SB Skier	20-Max
Spiderman Push-Up	10-15
Jump Rope	60 sec

CIRCUIT B	
*SB Side Lunge	10
1 ¼ Bulgarian Split Squat	10-15
TRX Inverted Row	10-15
*One-Arm Grappler Press	10-15
Jump Rope	60 sec

CIRCUIT C	
*TRX Jump Squat	15
*DB High Pull	8-10
Crouched Long Jump	Max
Mountain Climber	10-15
Jump Rope	60 sec

WORKOUT TWO

CIRCUIT A	REPS
*DB Bench Press	15-20
SB Tuck to Push-Up	Max
SB Abdominal Crunch	15
Burpees	10

CIRCUIT B	
DB Incline Bench	15
*Single-Leg V-Up	20
*Heavy MB Slam	12
Mountain Climber	30

CIRCUIT C	
*Standing Military Press	10-12
*Bench Dip	10-12
Cable Woodchop	10-12
DB Front Raise (palms facing in)	12-15
Bike/Treadmill Sprint	60 sec

WORKOUT THREE

CIRCUIT A	REPS
BB Bentover Row	12
*KB Squat to Upright Row	12
*Side Leg Lift off Bench	15
Side High Kicks	20
Jump Rope	60 sec

CIRCUIT B	
Cable Lat Pulldown	15
Oblique Crunch	20
Cable Pullover	12
*Single-Arm DB Row	30
Jump Rope	60 sec

CIRCUIT C	
Single-Leg Hip Thrust	10-12
Pistol Squat	10-12
*SB Russian Twist	10-12
*MB Single-Leg Glute Bridge	12-15
Jump Rope	60 sec

PERFORM EACH CIRCUIT 3-4 TIMES, RESTING 60-90 SECONDS BETWEEN ROUNDS.

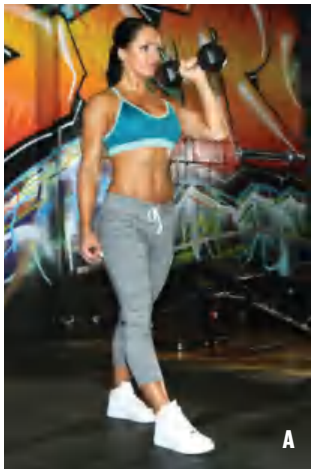
*EXERCISES ARE PICTURED ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES. ▸

(NOT PICTURED)

1 ¼ BULGARIAN SPLIT SQUAT

Set up: Stand facing away from a flat bench. Extend one leg backward and place your foot on the bench behind you, laces down if possible. Lean your upper body slightly forward, in line with your front knee.

Action: Bend your front knee and squat down until your front thigh is parallel to the floor. Before coming all the way up, straighten your front leg slightly to come up a quarter of the way, then lower back down into the full squat. Now press up to the starting position and repeat.



ONE-ARM DB PRESS ^

Set up: Stand holding a dumbbell in one hand at shoulder height, palm facing in. Step the opposite leg forward **(A)**.

Action: Press the dumbbell straight up until your arm is fully extended **(B)**. Lower back down and repeat. Complete all reps, switch sides, and repeat.

MODIFICATION:
IF THIS IS TOO TRICKY, DO A REGULAR BALL TUCK BY PULLING YOUR KNEES INTO YOUR CHEST.

SB SKIER ^

Set up: Place your feet on a stability ball and your hands on the floor. Walk your hands out until your body is straight.

Action: Bend your knees and pull the ball to one side. Straighten your legs to return to the starting position, then repeat on the other side. Continue alternating sides for all reps.

SB SIDE LUNGE >

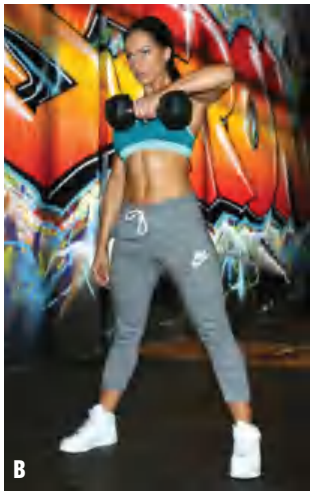
Set up: Stand sideways to a stability ball facing forward. Place your foot on the ball so your leg is straight and toes are pointing forward **(A)**.

Action: Lean your torso forward 45 degrees and bend your standing leg, pushing your hips back and down **(B)**. Raise back up to standing and repeat. Complete all reps, switch legs, and repeat.

ONE-ARM GRAPPLER PRESS

Set up: Place one end of a barbell into a corner (or a landmine). Stand holding the other end of the bar in front of your shoulder.

Action: Press the bar straight up until your arm is extended. As you lower the bar, rotate your torso slightly, bringing your elbow down towards your ribcage. Repeat. Complete all reps, switch arms, and repeat.



DB HIGH PULL ^

Set up: Place a dumbbell on the floor horizontally between your feet. Squat down and grab it with one hand, keeping your arm straight **(A)**.

Action: Explosively, come up to standing. At the same time, bend your elbow and pull the dumbbell up in front of your body to shoulder height **(B)**. Lower back down and repeat. Complete all reps, switch sides, and repeat.

SINGLE-LEG V-UP v

Set up: Begin on your back on the floor with your legs and arms extended.

Action: Contract your core and crunch up, raising one leg while simultaneously bringing your hands towards your foot. Lower back down and repeat on the other side. Continue alternating sides for all reps.

COACH'S TIP

Keep your elbows pointing 45 degrees from your body to take pressure off the shoulders.

DB BENCH PRESS <

Set up: Holding a dumbbell in each hand, lie face up on a flat bench. Hold the dumbbells above your chest with arms bent and close to your sides **(A)**.

Action: Extend your arms and press the weights straight up **(B)**. Bend your arms to lower back down to the starting position and repeat.

TRX JUMP SQUAT

Set up: Stand holding TRX handles facing the point of suspension. Stand far enough away so there is tension in the straps.

Action: Bend your knees and lower into a squat, then explosively jump into the air. Land in the squat position and repeat. ▶

HEAVY MB SLAM

Set up: Grab a heavy medicine ball and stand with feet shoulder-width apart or wider.

Action: Raise the ball straight above your head, extending your torso and coming up on your toes **(A)**, then slam the ball into the ground as hard as you can **(B)**. Pick up the ball and repeat.

SIDE LEG LIFT OFF BENCH >

Set up: Stand a few feet from a flat bench, facing forward. Place your foot on the bench with your toes facing forward and your leg straight **(A)**.

Action: Lean your torso away from the bench slightly for balance. Contract your glutes and lift your leg off the bench **(B)**, lower with control, and repeat. Complete all reps, switch legs, and repeat.

BENCH DIP V

Set up: Sit sideways on a bench with your feet elevated on another bench, or on the floor. Hold the bench on either side of your hips with elbows pointing to the back of the room and lift your butt off the bench

Action: Bend your elbows and lower your hips towards the floor. Contract your triceps and straighten your arms to raise back up, and repeat.

COACH'S TIP

To avoid shoulder pain, keep your shoulders back and your body as close to the bench as possible. Also try to keep your wrists straight and close to the edge of the bench.

STANDING MILITARY PRESS ^

Set up: Stand holding a barbell in front of your collarbone with hands shoulder-width apart. Knees should be slightly bent, not locked.

Action: Press the bar directly overhead by straightening your arms. Slowly lower back down to the starting position and repeat.

KB SQUAT TO UPRIGHT ROW ^

Set up: Place a kettlebell on the floor between your feet and stand with feet wider than shoulder-width apart. Squat down and grab the handles with both hands, keeping your weight in your heels and chest lifted.

Action: Stand up while simultaneously pulling the kettlebell up the front of your body to chest height. Your elbows should be bent and pointing slightly upwards. Return to the starting position and repeat.

COACH'S TIP

Reach your arm forward slightly in the down position so you feel a stretch in your lat muscle, then pull it back to your hip to really contract it.

SINGLE-ARM DUMBBELL ROW ^

Set up: Hold a dumbbell in your left hand with your right knee and right palm on a flat bench so your upper body is parallel to the floor. Extend your left arm down so the dumbbell is just above the floor with your palm facing in.

Action: Bend your elbow and pull the weight up to your side. Hold, then lower the weight back down with control and repeat. Complete all reps, switch sides, and repeat.

SB RUSSIAN TWIST <

Set up: Lie on your back on a stability ball with your feet flat on the floor, knees bent 90 degrees and your arms extended straight above your chest. Place your palms together **(A)**.

Action: Rotate your torso to one side following with your arms until they are parallel to the floor **(B)**. Rotate back to the starting position, then repeat on the opposite side. That's one rep. Continue rotating from side to side for all reps.

MB SINGLE-LEG GLUTE BRIDGE ^

Set up: Lie on your back on the floor with one knee bent and your foot on a medicine ball, and the other leg straight and raised towards the ceiling.

Action: Press your heel into the ball and raise your hips off the floor. Hold at the top, then lower back down and repeat. Complete all reps, switch legs, and repeat. S

PERFORM 15-30 MINUTES OF STEADY STATE CARDIO AFTER COMPLETING ALL THE CIRCUITS.

BEPOWERFUL®

AVAILABLE AT:

GNC LIVE WELL

BODYBUILDING.COM

EUROPA SPORTS PRODUCTS

***THESE STATEMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN EVALUATED BY THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION. THESE PRODUCTS ARE NOT INTENDED TO DIAGNOSE, TREAT, CURE OR PREVENT ANY DISEASE.**

† When combined with a proper exercise and nutrition regimen. Statements based on early-stage independent 3rd party in vivo and / or in vitro model scientific research data findings for individual ingredients.

One serving of **Whey HD™** provides you with 25 grams of undeniably delectable protein with unique mouthwatering flavors. The ULTRA PREMIUM formula of **Whey HD™** digests quickly and dissolves easily making it the choice for recovery and building lean muscle.

IT'S THAT GOOD

bpi SPORTS

WWW.BPISPORTS.COM

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL BUCETA

THE POWER OF POSTURE

WRITTEN BY **KASIA WIND**

Science is showing that your sweat sessions are no longer enough to keep your body, and your mind, in top shape. Find out how to score a stronger physique, a more efficient workout and a healthier life by training your posture – inside and outside the gym.

There's a reason fitness competitors stand tall as they pose on stage, and why exactly zero gym selfies feature hunched backs: Your posture greatly impacts your appearance, marking the difference between a strong body and a crumpled physique.

But how you stand affects more than just your Instagram. Science is showing an impressive connection between your posture and your health. One medical study, published in the *American Journal of Pain Management* found that spine pain, headache, blood pressure, and pulse are among the functions most easily influenced by your body's position, and slouching has been linked to a wide range of full-body symptoms, from back pain to problems with digestion (think of your intestines like a garden hose that kinks up when bent forward, impeding water flow).

The most surprising, however, has been a body of new research drawing a connection between posture and brain function, demonstrating that it can play a role in your moods, your mental health and even how you handle pressure. A 2015 study published in *Health Psychology*, found that people who were secured into an upright posture with physio tape while suffering through a high-stress task felt stronger, happier and more enthusiastic than those who were taped into a slumped position. Study authors concluded that a slouched posture may be neurologically linked to more negative emotions because of the brain's astounding ability to translate posture cues into feelings, and that sitting upright (sans tape, of course) may be a simple behavioral strategy to help build resilience to stress.

From an athletic standpoint, posture and performance also go hand-in-hand, according to Steven Weiniger, DC, an internationally-recognized posture expert, and author of *Stand Taller, Live Longer* (BodyZone LLC, 2008). "Strong posture can help you jump higher, run faster and lift heavier," he says. "Think of a car: If the wheels are all straight, it's going to go the fastest it's designed to go and run smoothly. But if the wheels are not quite all pointing in the same direction, it's not going to go as fast, everything will wobble, and the parts will wear out more quickly."

Not only does your posture dictate the way you move, but it also has an effect on how efficiently your fit parts function. "When you have poor posture, your lungs don't expand fully, so you reduce your vital lung capacity (which dictates how much oxygen you take in when you breathe) by up to 30 percent," says Paula Moore, DC, creator of Posturecize (posturevideos.com) and author of *The Posture Doctor* (Ecademy Press, 2012). That means less oxygen to the brain and muscle tissue, which, for women who train, translates to less energy and stamina in the gym, weaker muscles and slower recovery times.

Add that to the fact that weak posture contributes to aches, pains and injuries (in women, those of the rotator cuff and knees are common due to forward-slumping habits) that can keep you out of the gym, and you've got a perfect case for why shaping up your posture should be on every strong woman's to-do list.

ASSESSING YOUR POSTURE

Strong posture is about more than standing straight and keeping your shoulders back. "Improving posture means straightening how your body balances, and how it moves," says Weiniger. And as a woman who lifts, it's important to identify how your posture stacks up, so that any poor habits can be corrected before they become ingrained in your routine, potentially leading to injury. "While exercise is beneficial in many ways, it can also cement unhelpful patterns of use in the body," says Kathleen Porter, a movement educator and posture coach at the Center for Natural Alignment in Portland, and author of *Natural Posture for Pain-Free Living* (Healing Arts Press, 2013). "For example, if a woman's head is perpetually forward during training, it will only get worse through repetitive movement, unless she addresses it."

Use the following three posture principles to assess just how fit your posture is, then follow the tips on page 64 to help you straighten up.

1. BALANCE Your body has four postural "weight centers" that need to be balanced and in line when you stand straight, according to Weiniger. "Posture is strong when you balance your head over your torso, your torso over your pelvis, and your pelvis over your legs," he says, recommending that you have a friend take a "posture picture" to assess whether any of your "zones" are out of alignment. Stand in front of a door with panels for an easy way to tell whether everything is lining up. How well you balance your body, say, from one leg to the other, is also a good indicator of posture. "Saying you have weak balance is saying that your posture is weak," says Weiniger. Stand tall and straight, and lift your left leg for 20 to 30 seconds; then, do the same thing on the other side. Are you finding that you're able to maintain your upright posture better on one versus the other? "You should be doing the same thing on both sides in terms of function," says Weiniger. "If you're not balancing equally on both legs, chances are that you have poor balance and weak posture."

"Strong posture can help you jump higher, run faster and lift heavier. It's like a car: If the wheels are straight, it's going to go the fastest."

2. SYMMETRY Similar to balance, "symmetry is ideal to posture," says Moore. "When your body isn't symmetrical, the different 'loads' create stresses on your body and lead to pain and muscle strain." When standing in front of a mirror, the left side of your body should be a mirror image of the right side, and the back side of the body should be balanced with the front. Stand in front of a mirror, and ask these questions:

> *Is your head off to the right side more than the left side, or vice versa? This indicates poor symmetry.*

> *When your hair is pulled back, can you see your ears equally? If one is harder to see fully than the other, you*

might have a habit of rotating your head more to one side.

> *If you put your back against a wall, does the back of your head touch the wall as well? If it takes effort, or you have to lift your chin up to make your head touch, odds are that you have forward head posture.*

3. AWARENESS OF YOUR BODY IN SPACE Weak posture takes place when you're unable to know, or control, where your body is in space. "Our posture is mostly unconscious," says Weiniger, which is why it's critical to develop a sense for when your body is symmetrical and balanced. Knowing the difference between what "good" and "bad" posture feel like is the only way you'll be able to ensure that you maintain healthy posture habits throughout the day. **TEST IT:** Have a friend take a photo of you, with what you believe to be a tall, strong posture, then assess the results. "The more accurately you're standing tall and straight when you believe you are standing tall and straight, the better your posture," says Weiniger.

WORKOUTS AREN'T ENOUGH?

You may think that your regular sweat sessions protect you against the consequences of poor posture, but if you're spending an hour a day in the weight room and the rest compressed into an office chair (or, as Moore would say, if you're a "slouch potato"), you're no better off than the average couch potato.

"Unfortunately, the studies are showing us that even if we go to the gym three, four, even five times a week, it's not enough to offset the damage that we do while sitting for prolonged periods," says Moore. "Our current lifestyles have a detrimental effect on our health."

Aside from all the sitting, the very nature of the way we work to the way we communicate is jeopardizing our posture. "You're spending a huge chunk of your life with your body folded," says Weiniger. When you're working long hours hunched over your keyboard, all that leaning forward is destructive to your posture, resulting in tight chest muscles, weak back muscles, too much stress on the spine, a forward head posture and rounded shoulders.

The effects are even more damaging when you factor in the amount of time you spend bent over your iPad or smartphone. In 2014, an orthopedic surgeon led a ground-breaking study published in the journal *Surgical Technology International* which showed that, while the average human head weighs roughly 10 pounds, bending it forward at a 60 degree angle, as most people do while sending a text message, increases the stress placed on the neck to the equivalent of roughly 60 pounds; that's like carrying the weight of almost three car tires!

So how do you defend yourself against your body's natural tendency towards a sloped "iPosture"? Experts say it all starts with small lifestyle changes. "Just like a piece of cardboard that's folded in half in the same spot over and over again, your tissues hold their crease," says Weiniger. The only way to correct your posture is to start correcting your habits. "Posture is not the luck of the draw, where some people have a good one and some don't," says Moore. "Your posture is a habit, and like any habit, if you put in the time, you'll reap the rewards." ▸

STRAIGHT-UP FACT:
A STUDY HAS FOUND THAT ENGAGING IN "EXPANSIVE POSTURES" – ONES WHERE YOUR BODY IS OPENED UP AND YOUR LIMBS ARE SPREAD OUT, VERSUS TIGHTLY PACKED TOGETHER – CAN DECREASE CORTISOL, YOUR BODY'S STRESS HORMONE, BY 25 PERCENT.

YOUR POSTURE PLAN

Your mother already told you to stop slouching. To really shape up your posture, take these surprising pointers from the latest science and leading posture experts.

1. THINK BEYOND THE GYM

"In terms of posture, your lifestyle plays a larger role by far, than anything that you can do in the gym," says Eric Goodman, DC, a Colorado-based strength coach, former chiropractor and personal trainer, and co-author of *Foundation: Redefine Your Core, Conquer Back Pain and Move with Confidence* (Rodale, 2011). "You have to really pay attention to what you're doing in daily life."

For starters, "you can counteract the risks of sitting all day at the office with constant small movements – roll your shoulders, turn your neck, wiggle your legs," says Moore, who created a specific set of posture-corrective exercises that can be done right from your office desk, called "Sit Less, Move More."

But, while you'll often hear about ways to add more movement to your nine-to-five (chiropractors recommend everything from treadmill desks to stability ball chairs), don't overlook the less obvious: your posture habits at night. "You spend a third of your life in bed," says Weiniger, "and a poor sleeping position can create mechanical stress that can stretch your muscles, ligaments and other spinal soft tissues." According to the *Clinical Journal of Pain*, approximately 40 percent of women have spinal issues, and many get worse due to poor sleeping posture.

HOW TO DO IT: Correct your posture between the sheets with these tips from Moore and Weiniger:

- **Don't buy into "miracle" or special "cervical" pillows, since your sleep position, not a million-dollar head support, is the largest factor impacting your posture.**
- **Sleep on your back or your side, since sleeping on your stomach means you're constantly keeping your neck craned to one side to allow for easy breathing.**
- **Use only one pillow, and focus on its size. "Your pillow shouldn't prop you up, flexing your head up during sleep," says Moore. "It should only fill the gap between your ear and your mattress." A comfortable size will depend on your individual body and head size.**
- **If you're a side sleeper, "keep your body aligned by sleeping with a pillow between your knees," says Weiniger. Your hips are thicker than your knees, so supporting the upper leg keeps it from falling in front of the body and twisting the pelvis.**

GET MOORE'S POSTURE-CORRECTIVE EXERCISES AT BIT.LY/1MGYRYD.
The first 100 visitors to use the promo code STRONG100 will get a 50 percent discount!

2. LEARN TO HINGE FROM YOUR HIPS

"The hip joints have a natural dominant role in human movement," says Goodman. He recommends that all fit women learn how to hinge from the hips, versus from the abs, or the spine, to make their posture and movement more efficient, and to help avoid injuries. "The spine only has a few degrees of healthy motion, whereas the hip joints are the most movable joints in the body, and the most protected and supported," he says, adding that by learning to hinge and pivot properly from the hips, the spine doesn't have to do all the work, because the stronger glutes and hamstrings take the pressure off.

HOW TO DO IT: To avoid injury and brace your spine properly when bending, extend your back in a straight line from your buttock to your neck and bend from the hip joint. Whether you're training in the gym or just picking up a sock off the floor, it's a technique that will improve the way you move.

3. REDEFINE YOUR CORE

Your abs, especially the deep transverse abdominus muscle, have long been regarded as the central "core" of your body, the hub that stabilizes and keeps your skeletal structure upright, and from which all movement originates. But, while their role in supporting healthy posture is still considered important, your abs' cred as your body's primary posture powerhouse is beginning to shift.

In 2011, Goodman, who has worked with many professional athletes and teams, revolutionized the realm of athletic posture training with the introduction of Foundation Training (foundationtraining.com), a program based on the simple notion that strengthening the back side of the body, called the posterior chain, allows your strongest muscles – your neck, back, butt, hamstrings and heels – to support the weight of a weak, often forward-hunched front body, and propel a more efficient kind of movement.

HOW TO DO IT: To train the body to naturally rely on these large muscles for posture and movement, and avoid placing additional stress on the spine, Goodman recommends that athletes perform at least four exercises for the back of the body for each exercise that focuses on strengthening the front, until they've developed a dominant posterior chain. "If you want to strengthen your core at this stage in life, especially if you're a person who goes to the gym all the time, doing crunches isn't going to cut it," he says. "You need to start looking at your glutes, your adductors, your hamstrings and your back. When you incorporate posterior chain work, you are not just going to have better posture, but much more endurance, strength and flexibility. Every time you go to the gym, you will notice an improvement."

4. BREATHE BETTER

Your breathing habits are surprisingly influential to your posture, and not just because they help to minimize stress and tension in your muscles.

HOW TO DO IT: **Start your day with a goal of deep, relaxed breathing in mind, and experts say you'll be more likely to sit up straight, since slouching with your head jetted forward makes it challenging to take in air.**

> **Next, focus on breathing from your diaphragm instead of your chest. While you're already used to doing this during training, noticing that the extra oxygen intake helps to give you wind and speed up recovery, applying this technique to other parts of your day can boost your mindfulness, teaching you to slow down and check in on your posture, and improving your awareness of your body's position in space.**

> **Finally, if you're sitting for more than eight hours a day, Goodman recommends starting your day with "decompression breathing," a resistance exercise that helps counteract the gravity that's actively trying to push your ribcage down towards your hips, leading to poor posture. "Decompression breathing inflates the ribcage in a way that allows the lungs to function more efficiently, and retrains the muscles surrounding the ribcage to support a taller, stronger posture," he says.**

A DEMONSTRATION OF DECOMPRESSION BREATHING can be found on the Foundation Training YouTube channel or go to foundationtraining.com.

5. FLEX IN FRONT OF A MIRROR

If you have poor posture in the gym and don't realize it, chances are you're going to continue building on those habits, which can lead to muscle imbalances (if you're training without symmetry) and injuries, not to mention a whole lot of wasted time on ineffective training. "If your form is poor and crummy, your workout is poor and crummy," says Goodman.

HOW TO DO IT: To ensure you're using proper form, particularly in the weight room, get in front of a full-length mirror and practice regular posture check-ins until you get a sense of where your body is in space, and what "right" versus "wrong" form feels like, not just looks like. Begin with the visual cues, and keep it up until you're naturally able to perform the exercises without the need to check in.

"When you train in front of a mirror, you can see your symmetry. You can see how you're standing," says Goodman. "If your shoulders are slumping forward, you can expand your ribcage outward. If your feet are turned out while you're doing an exercise, you can face them forward. Small things like that make all the impact in the world."

"According to the* Clinical Journal of Pain, *approximately 40 percent of women have spinal issues."

6. SUPPORT YOUR GIRLS

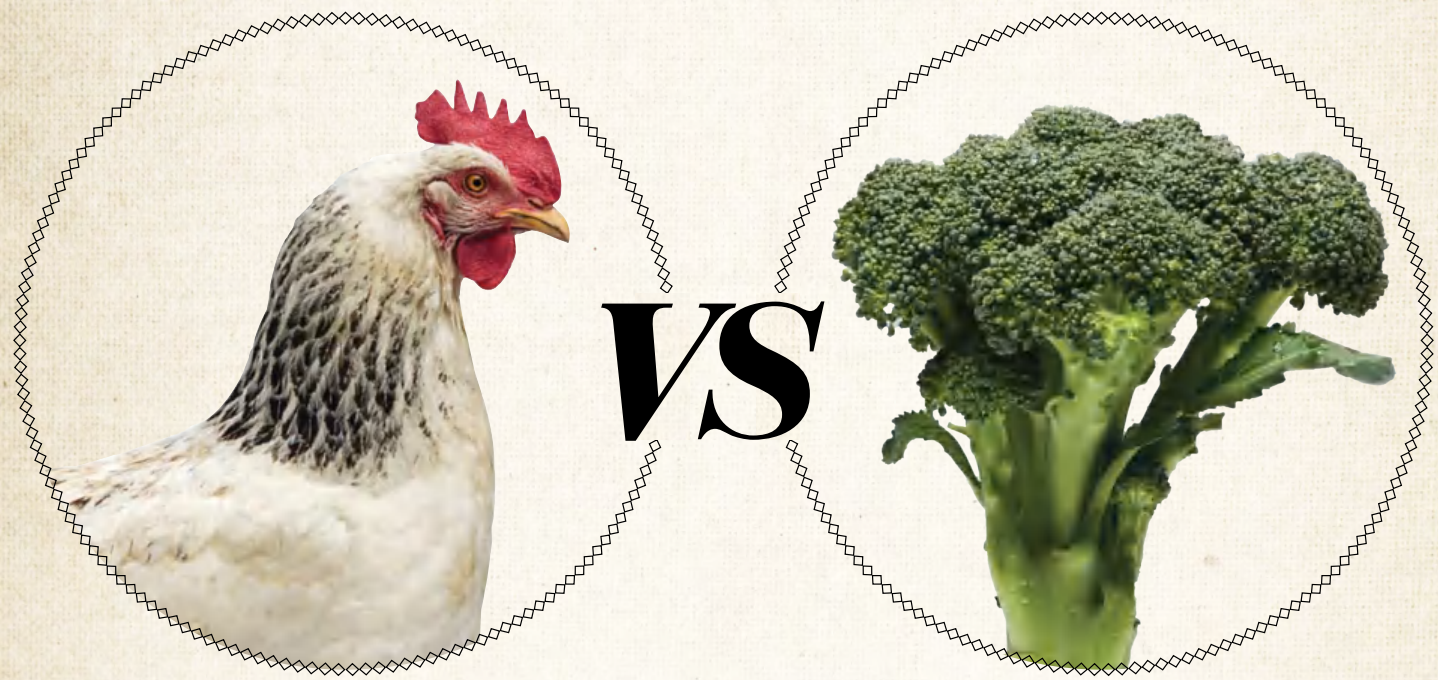
Changing your posture can start with a visit to a lingerie store, says Moore. "The majority of women are wearing the wrong-sized bras and sports bras," she says. "If you're one of them, it can compress your thorax, which is going to make flexibility a problem, or it won't give you enough support and the weight of your chest will alter your posture."

HOW TO DO IT: **To ensure you're supported without being squished, Moore suggests visiting a quality bra fitter for a proper sizing. While she doesn't endorse any specific "posture" products because of a lack of science and their potential to be "gimmicky," others, like Weiniger, say that whipping out a bra specifically marketed towards posture correction "once in awhile" might provide a mental cue for women to stay mindful of posture in the gym. If you're willing to give it a try and keep an open mind, of course, Goodman recommends the IntelliSkin posture bra (full disclosure: a friend of his designed it). "It pulls you back and open, and helps to pull the chest up and the shoulders back."** S

TAKE YOUR FITNESS TO THE NEXT LEVEL

SUBSCRIBE NOW AT
STRONGFITNESSMAG.COM

THE PROTEIN DEBATE



Are high-protein diets igniting our muscle gains or fueling chronic disease?

Two experts go head to head.

WRITTEN BY **DAN FILIPE**

BROCCOLI, VEGGIES & PROTEIN PHOTOS PAUL BUCETA
CHICKEN PHOTO SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/IGNATIUS 63 BACKGROUND PHOTO SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/MAXYM

THESE DAYS, NO TOPIC IS DISPUTED MORE IN THE WORLD OF FITNESS THAN PROTEIN,

leaving us questioning if we're getting enough, too much, or if we should be ditching meat entirely.

Here, we'll examine two sides of the growing debate over our favorite macronutrient, and whether we should be consuming more to get those gains or cutting back to avoid chronic disease.

FUELING THE MODERN ATHLETE

High-protein, modern-era diets have garnered tremendous popularity, thanks to their promises of rapid weight loss and a healthier, more muscular physique. Weight trainers, athletes and especially crossfitters alike have embraced the Paleolithic or "Caveman" diet, lending some cred to this meaty, low-carb approach. "Crossfitters are looking to fuel their bodies in a clean and natural way," says Marc Bubbs, Naturopathic doctor, Certified Strength Coach and author of *The Paleo Project: the 21st Century Guide to Looking Leaner, Getting Stronger and Living Longer* (FriesenPress, 2015). "The research tells us that animal protein is the most nutrient dense food, and not something that we need to be afraid of."

For athletes, or anyone training at a high level, Bubbs preaches not only choosing ideal animal protein sources, such as grass fed or pasture-raised, but also making sure to hit an optimal daily protein intake for the best performance possible. "There's a lot of new research coming down the pipeline showing that our optimal protein intakes can actually be quite a lot higher than what we think," he says. "For any female training intensely, I think getting upwards of one gram per pound of body weight is a very good strategy."

THE PROTEIN OBSESSION

As convincing as the pro-protein arguments may be, there's growing support for the other side of the debate, as the majority of North Americans consume more meat than ever, yet obesity and chronic disease are on the rise. This is the stance surgeon and nutrition expert Garth Davis takes in his new book, *Proteinaholic: How Our Obsession With Meat is Killing Us and What We Can Do About It (HarperOne, 2015)*. "The point of the book is not to say that protein is bad," he says. "Rather, that this obsession with protein is helping us make bad food choices in general, which aren't making us healthier but making us sicker." Davis says he sees evidence of this theory in—get ready for it—athletes. "For instance, I tell someone to eat an apple and then I look at their diet log and instead of the apple they had beef jerky," he says. "[I ask] 'Why did you have beef jerky?' [They say] 'Because I needed the protein.' That's the central problem right there. This belief that you need this excessive amount of protein which you absolutely do not need."

A reformed "proteinaholic" himself, Davis preached the familiar high-protein gospel to his clients until some alarming personal health concerns influenced him to make the switch to a vegan lifestyle. Now, he's convinced that our meat-laden diets may lead to an increased risk of chronic illnesses later in life, not only for couch potatoes, ▸

22

A LARGE-SCALE STUDY IN *JAMA INTERNAL MEDICINE* FOUND THAT A VEGETARIAN DIET WAS ASSOCIATED WITH A 22 PERCENT LOWER RISK OF COLORECTAL CANCER VERSUS A DIET CONTAINING MEAT.

but athletes as well. "I find this problem with protein addiction to actually be extremely bad in the fitness community. It's one of the worst hit by this erroneous thought that we need these extremely high protein diets." He adds, "There's not just a belief that you need a lot of protein, but that it has to be animal protein. And both of those statements are completely erroneous."

ALL ABOUT THE GAINS

In his time working with the Canadian Men's National Basketball team and with other elite level athletes, Bubbs has become well aware of common misconceptions with high-protein diets, namely that the body can only absorb doses of 30 grams at a time. "That's just not true," he says. "Yes, to stimulate muscle protein synthesis you really only need 30 grams of protein, that's correct. But the extra protein that you're getting delays the breakdown of protein in the body. So you're still absorbing and utilizing it to stop muscle degradation and breakdown. For someone who's performing at a high level, that's critical."

What's more, Bubbs adds that women have a unique concern to address: your period. "Female athletes lose blood, so they need to build their iron levels back up," he says. "The most absorbable forms of iron are in animal protein, especially in the organ meats."

But Davis' recommendation to athletes is to stop thinking about nutrition in terms of macronutrients and look at the bigger picture. Of the numerous studies cited in his book, the most recent is a 2009 study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* that compared various weight loss diets with different compositions of fat, protein, and carbs. The concluding results stated that reduced-calorie diets led to "clinically meaningful" weight loss regardless of which macronutrients they emphasized. "This is the hardest thing for modern day athletes because they've been preached to so much about macronutrient composition," he says. "But the studies have been very, very clear that macronutrient composition doesn't matter at all." In a nutshell, Davis says hitting your fitness goals comes down to calories, not macros. More calories equals more muscle, less calories equals weight loss.

WHAT'S IT ALL MEAN?

With pros and cons to both sides of the debate, even science doesn't seem to be making the protein controversy perfectly clear. However, what you can conclude from the previous arguments is this: as an active woman, you need protein, and perhaps even more than the average, less active individual. But in addition to getting your protein from high quality animal sources, it doesn't hurt to consider looking beyond the barnyard to fulfill your daily quota. Combinations of plant-based options like seeds, legumes and grains will boost your protein count, as well as provide a ton of health benefits to help ward off disease and illness. SF

SFM **For more on plant-based protein options, go to *strongfitnessmag.com***

"THERE'S NEW RESEARCH SHOWING THAT OUR OPTIMAL PROTEIN INTAKES CAN BE A LOT HIGHER."

UNCOVER YOUR STRONG

Killer Workouts • Nutrition Seminars • Revived Motivation

ATTEND AS MANY CAMPS AS YOU WANT FOR FREE?*

Get your **STRONGpass** now!

STRONGCAMP

PRESENTED BY STRONG FITNESS MAGAZINE

VISIT **STRONG-CAMP.COM** FOR MORE INFORMATION ON **STRONGPASS** AND UPCOMING CAMPS

*To attend STRONGCAMP, a registration fee of $50 per camp applies. This product will automatically renew each year. All prices in USD.

MODEL: ALICIA BELL. HAIR & MAKEUP: LORI FABRIZIO
SHOT ON LOCATION AT OTB TORONTO

This scientifically proven training technique boosts your fitness level and burns fat like crazy in record time. It may also be the toughest four minutes. **Ever.**

WRITTEN BY **JON-ERIK KAWAMOTO, MSC, CSCS** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **DAVE LAUS**

GET FIT IN FOUR

With all the craziness that comes with this time of year, the winter months present a challenge when you're trying to fit in your workouts. Long, drawn-out training sessions likely aren't realistic, and some days even making it to the gym requires all the stars to align. But don't worry, a style of training known as the Tabata Method is designed to fit into your to-do list so you won't be jeopardizing your hard-earned gains.

Tabata is a form of interval training where you alternate 20 seconds of work with 10 seconds of rest for eight rounds. If you just did the math, this adds up to a total of only four minutes of activity—but there is one caveat: the 20 seconds of work is to be performed with maximal effort.

THE SCIENCE

This protocol was first used in a 1996 experiment where a researcher by the name of Dr. Izumi Tabata, compared the difference between high intensity intermittent training and moderate endurance exercise training. They found that performing this intense four-minute bout four times per week for six weeks was more effective at improving subjects' aerobic and anaerobic capacity compared to the moderate endurance exercises.

Although the effect of this form of interval training on fat loss was not assessed in Tabata's research, a 2014 study in *Applied Physiology, Nutrition and Metabolism* examined whether sprint interval training can alter body composition and waist circumference among women. Fifteen recreationally active women performed 30-second maximal sprints on a self-propelled treadmill with four minutes of rest, ▸

three times per week. After six weeks, the sprint intervals reduced fat mass by eight percent and waist circumference by 3.5 percent.

The exact mechanisms relating interval training and fat loss are still uncertain but it appears that fat metabolism plays a very important role during and after this type of training. Also, though still controversial, post-exercise metabolism seems to be elevated after interval training, which can contribute to the total amount of calories burned throughout the day. In a nutshell, Tabata training doesn't require a huge time commitment to boost fat loss, and it has been shown to be effective for recreationally active women.

HOW TO: Set an interval timer (or fitness app timer) to repeat 20- and 10-second intervals for 8 rounds. Perform 20 seconds of the first exercise, rest 10 seconds, then move to the next, and so on. Once you've completed the entire circuit, go back to the start and repeat the entire thing for a total of 8 rounds.

The following four exercises target all of your major muscle groups. You'll perform each exercise twice for a total of 8 rounds. If you're really energetic, you can perform the circuit 2-3 times. Keep your form clean but go as fast as possible. Sip water throughout and get ready to push hard!

THE WORKOUT

ONE. Kettlebell Swing
TWO. Dumbbell Squat to Overhead Press
THREE. Fast Mountain Climber
FOUR. Weighted Lunge Jump

KETTLEBELL SWING

Set Up: Hold the kettlebell with both hands and stand with feet wider than hip-width apart. Hinge at the hips, bending the knees slightly to bring the bell down between your upper thighs.

Action: Keeping your arms straight and shoulders pulled back, swing the bell up to chest height, squeeze your glutes, tightening your abs and locking out the knees. Lower the bell with control and repeat.

DB SQUAT TO OVERHEAD PRESS

Set Up: Hold a pair of dumbbells at shoulder height with elbows bent and palms facing in. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart.

Action: Bend your knees and lower into a squat. Extend your legs to come back up to standing. At the top of the movement, press the weights straight overhead. Lower the weights and go directly back into a squat. Repeat.

WEIGHTED LUNGE JUMP

Set Up: Hold a dumbbell in each hand at your sides and stand with one foot in front of the other, with both knees bent to 90 degrees.

Action: Straighten your legs and explode upwards, switching your legs in the air so you land in a lunge with the opposite foot in front. Continue alternating legs. S

FAST MOUNTAIN CLIMBER

Set Up: Get into high plank position with arms straight and legs extended behind you.

Action: Quickly bend one knee and bring it up towards your chest. Touch your foot to the ground then return it to the starting position and repeat on the opposite leg. Continue alternating legs as fast as you can.

TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR TABATA WORKOUT, PERFORM A GENERAL WARM-UP (EASY JOGGING, SKIPPING OR BASIC CALISTHENICS) FOR 10 MINUTES.

"I know I would not stand this tall today, had I not suffered the pain of my yesterdays. This is my story."

BECOMING A BADASS

WRITTEN BY **TIFFANY GASTON, FITNESS PERSONALITY, AUTHOR & MODEL**
LEAD PHOTO BY **JAMES PATRICK**

FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, I've had a strong internal fire—a perpetual yearning to push and challenge myself. At times, this fire has driven me to success, at others, it led me to some dark, unhealthy places. What I'm about to share with you is incredibly raw. These memories are painful and only through years of self-work have I been able to come to terms with them. But I share them with you now in hopes that some of you will identify with my story, and perhaps find strength and comfort in knowing you are not alone.

FAMILY PHOTOS LISA HENSLEY SQUAT PHOTO PAUL BUCETA

HUNGRY TO BE THIN

At six years old I was already a competitive gymnast, with a naturally athletic build. Others would comment on my muscular physique, which led me to develop an extreme self-consciousness about my body at a young age. Over the years, increasingly, I wanted nothing more than to disappear and just be the girl that didn't stand out.

By the time I hit my pre-teens, I was enthralled with the supermodels of the 90's, and constantly compared myself to their tall, slender bodies. My desire to look like them consumed me, until I began restricting my calories in an effort to starve the muscle from my already small, 100-lbs frame. My weight began to drop. I watched the needle on the scale as if it were a lifeline to a world to which I so badly needed to belong. Eventually consuming only iceberg lettuce and drinking water over the course of an entire day, I discovered a means of having complete control — a feeling of power.

My parents worked full time and did not immediately take notice of what was going on. I'd discovered ways to conceal my behavior, wearing oversized clothing and meticulously moving food around my plate to make it look like I was eating. I thought I could get away with it, but eight months later, weighing a meager 85 lbs, there was no more denying my illness. My parents had become suspicious and threatened to hospitalize me if I refused to discontinue my behavior. Reluctantly, I agreed to get professional help.

GETTING HEALTHY

I went through a depression, mourning the weak, sickly body I had valued as an accomplishment. But in working with a therapist, I slowly began to heal and eventually, I wanted to get healthy. I stopped obsessing over achieving a certain number on the scale, and instead, sought to gain a better understanding about health through fitness.

I discovered weightlifting in high school at the age of 16. I joined a gym and hired a trainer to teach me proper form and technique, and as my passion grew stronger, so did my body. Before long, getting skinny was no longer the objective — obtaining power, strength and confidence became my ultimate goal. By the time I turned 18, I was healthy both in body and mind, and felt in control of my life and the direction I was headed.

FIGHTING MY DEMONS

I wish I could say this was where my story ended, with me being healthy and happy. But my old insecurities were still hiding deep within me, waiting for an opportunity to steal my power again. During this time, I began dating an attractive, successful man who was eight years older than I was, and I was completely infatuated with him. But it was anything but a fairytale romance. As time went on, his own demons began to show themselves. We fought constantly. If I'd get attention from other men, he would verbally punish me for it. He would put me down, then beg forgiveness, and the cycle would continue.

"ON ONE OCCASION, HE POINTED A LOADED GUN TO MY HEAD. I WANTED OUT."

Eventually, his verbal abuse evolved into more aggressive, physical behavior. Our fights became violent, often involving him pushing, shoving and throwing me around. On one occasion, he pointed a loaded gun to my head. I wanted out, but each time I tried to leave, he would promise to change and I told myself this was his way of showing love. Friends and family begged me to get away from him and finally, after getting a restraining order, meeting my future husband and moving over 2500 miles away, I did.

STRONGER THAN YESTERDAY

The emotional damage from that three-year relationship was not easy for me to overcome. I credit my now husband of nearly 16 years for teaching me how to communicate, and for showing me that real love doesn't hurt. It doesn't hold you down — it lifts you up. My weak links needed repair and I was dedicated to making that happen. It was the beginning of my transformation from a scared little girl, into the strong woman I am today.

Learning to love myself, and that I deserved love, was the hardest, most worthwhile battle I have ever fought. Even though I had hurt my body in my youth, then allowed another person to hurt me as a young adult, I understand now this was part of my evolution and learning process. I would not stand this tall today, had I not suffered the pain of my yesterdays. I now affirm myself with daily positivity, chase the things I am passionate about and love the person I have fought so hard to become. Though difficult, I now embrace those dark moments of my past as they have allowed me to shine more brightly today.

GET MORE INSPIRATION FROM TIFFANY'S STORY IN HER NEW BOOK *FROM BROKEN TO BADASS*, AVAILABLE THIS WINTER.

IMAGES 1 & 3: TIFFANY AND HUSBAND JOHN WITH THEIR THREE CHILDREN. **CENTER:** TIFFANY SQUATTING IN THE GYM.

COACH JOY

No-nonsense training advice for fat loss and strength gains.

JOY VICTORIA IS A TORONTO-BASED CERTIFIED PERSONAL TRAINER AND FORMER COMPETITIVE POWERLIFTER.

The Right Stuff

Which gym accessories can give your lifting game a boost, and which are just a waste of cash? Our resident trainer separates the good from the gimmicks.

ACCESSORIES SEEM TO BE A PART OF EVERY WOMAN'S LIFE, and that holds true at the gym as well. One of the things I'm most often asked about as a trainer is weight lifting accessories. Belts, shoes, straps, gloves; which are useful and which are a waste of money?

These are important questions because what you wear or use in the gym can not only affect your workout, but also your biomechanics—basically, how your body moves. Below is a breakdown of the principles you need to know to get the most out of your fitness accessories, and your workout.

BELTS

The purpose of a weightlifting belt is to help stabilize the spine, and facilitate greater abdominal bracing or tension during heavy lifting. You won't see any top level lifter lifting without a belt. But (and this is a big but), what it won't do for you is build core strength in and of itself. A lifting belt will not replace a consistent routine that improves your abdominal and core strength, but when used in conjunction with a strong core, it can definitely help you lift more, protect the back and improve your technique.

STRAPS

Straps are used most commonly in deadlifting during heavy, low reps, or sets of very high reps. Like belts, straps are very useful in the right context. While they don't strengthen your grip per se, they can be used to lift heavier weight when grip is your only limiting factor. However, for beginners, straps are probably not necessary, as the sensory feedback from the hands, and learning to position the wrist and grip is important for someone who is new to lifting. As you start to attempt heavier lifts and grip becomes an issue, straps could be very helpful.

SHOES

There are two types of shoes to consider to benefit squatting and strength training: One is any type of shoe with a hard, flat sole (like Converse), or minimalist quality (like FiveFingers). The other is the kind designed for Olympic weightlifters with a slight heel and velcro straps. Whether or not you can even benefit from either type of shoe depends on your squat style and individual structure, especially if you are a beginner. We all squat with different stances—some wider, some narrower—and different ways of positioning the back. Olympic lifters sit much more upright, letting the knees travel far forward (which a heel can help with), while powerlifters tend to have wider, more hip dominant squats. Unless you are training specifically in one of these two styles, it's best to pick your shoe based on what helps you train comfortably and progressively. Training in a minimalist shoe with a flat hard sole and enough room to spread the toes is a good idea no matter how you lift. This ensures a solid base and connection with the floor from which to create power. Once you have a feel for your own squat technique, Olympic lifting shoes can also be considered, but, if you're lifting recreationally or as part of a cross-training routine, save your money.

GLOVES

Gloves are one of the most common gym accessories, however they receive the least support from me. Gloves for lifting are similar to shoes; they cover a very important part of the body that contributes to motor learning, technique and sensory input. If you are starting to lift, chances are you're concerned that your hands will get sore, rough, and develop calluses (and if you're doing it right, they will). But, gloves can actually be more of a hindrance than a benefit to your progress as they create a barrier between you and the bar. While your hands might get tender when you first start out, lifting barehanded will improve your grip strength, coordination and technique. So what if you have a few calluses when you're strong?

In Strength,
Joy

TO CARE FOR CALLUSES, GENTLY BUFF WITH A PUMICE STONE AND FOLLOW WITH MOISTURIZER. THIS WILL PREVENT TEARING AND HELP SMOOTH THEM OUT.

JOY PHOTO BY EMPIRE IMAGING WEIGHTLIFTING PHOTO BY DAVE LAUS MODEL ALICIA BELL

STACEY MILAN, 2015 PRO BIKINI MODEL CHAMPION
evolution
revolution
saf
SeriousAboutFitness.com
2016 WOMEN'S FITNESS EVENTS
June 10-11 - SAF Summer Spectacular
September 10 - SAF Toronto Spectacular
October 14-15 - SAF Fall Spectacular
COMPETITIONS ★ CAMPS ★ MEDIA ★ MOTIVATION ★ INSPIRATION

Women to Watch

Find out how these real women are changing the face of fitness.

WRITTEN BY **CHELSEA CLARKE**

Quinn McNicholas

AGE: 20 **LOCATION:** MANAHAWKIN, NJ
GIG: PERSONAL TRAINER **SPORT:** KETTLEBELL

Comeback Kid

Quinn has put her body through a lot for a 20 year old. Growing up, she played soccer and basketball, sometimes spending seven days a week playing sports. Inevitably, she racked up a long list of injuries, including sprains, broken ribs, and whiplash. As she took time off to heal, she say she could feel her strength diminishing.

But the pain from all of her injuries couldn't compare to the emotional struggle she dealt with when at the age of 16, her younger sister was diagnosed with a ruptured blood vessel in her brain. "Time passed slowly while she was receiving treatment," says Quinn. "The house was so quiet without my sister around."

It was then that she began running again, and says the sense of freedom she felt was exactly what she needed. "It made me think of how lucky my sister was to be alive, how we're all lucky. I stopped complaining about working out and eating healthy. I was just happy to be in the moment."

Shortly after completing high school, Quinn knew she wanted to help others, and became a certified personal trainer. She says that starting her own training business and contributing to her community has made her the happiest she's ever felt. Quinn stays fit herself by doing total-body HIIT workouts, and booking sessions with her Kettlebell coach, who has motivated her to compete in the upcoming World Championships in November 2015.

"I stopped complaining about working out and was just happy to be in the moment."

QUINN PHOTO CONOR WILLEM | SASHA PHOTO PAUL TUCETA | MELISSA PHOTO BROOKE WOOD

Melissa Scanlan-Duncan

AGE: 34 **LOCATION:** WEST ST PAUL, MN
GIG: PSYCHOTHERAPIST **SPORT:** FITNESS, BIKINI, CROSSFIT

Mother Figure

You wouldn't know it by looking at her now, but when Melissa turned 30 she was overweight and lacking the motivation to care for herself. She had given her life over completely to her family, and felt that she was no longer nurturing her soul. To make matters worse, in 2012 she was diagnosed with Crohn's disease, and aside from lethargy and depression, she was also spending $600 each month on medications just to treat her symptoms. This was a far cry from the athletic dancer she once was, and she knew she had to find a way to change her course.

Through heavy lifting and clean eating, Melissa was able to move her Crohn's into remission. "I took back my life and my health," she says. "So often, we feel like we are victims of our circumstance, poor genetics, or bad choices, but this lifestyle showed me I could be in control." Melissa uses a combination of calisthenics and gymnastics to sculpt her physique, and says these two methods give her a competitive edge in the Fitness division. She began entering competitions under the mentorship of STRONGCAMP Ambassador Tara Thatcher, and just recently won Pro Status in Fitness. Melissa notes that her largest source of support is from her children, and her oldest has even started lifting with her. "It is the pride they have in their accomplishments and finding their strength that reminds me of my own."

Sasha Kuznetsova

AGE: 40 **LOCATION:** MINNEAPOLIS, MN **GIG:** PERSONAL TRAINER **SPORT:** BIKINI

Game Changer

Sasha knows a thing or two about changing courses in the journey of life. After making a difficult decision to leave an early professional basketball career in Moscow, Russia, Sasha felt lost. "I knew I was ready to leave basketball, but I missed the camaraderie of my teammates, and the competitiveness that comes with the sport," she says. After years of feeling burnt out and avoiding the gym, Sasha and her husband made a move across the globe, landing in Minneapolis, MN. She attributes her husband as the one to reignite her fire, after he surprised her with personal training sessions in their new hometown.

Sasha began looking for new challenges, and completed her personal training certification, and enrolled in her first Bikini competition.

Now, just turning 40 and with numerous awards under her belt, Sasha is working hard to grow her own business, YourFIT, a Minneapolis -based bootcamp that brings like-minded women together, giving them a motivational and supportive place to train. "In the end, it's not about how good your butt looks in your Lulu pants. It's how you feel about yourself," says Sasha. "Confidence and self-love are the best gains I can imagine my clients receiving."

ARE YOU THE NEXT WOMAN TO WATCH?

Share your competitive spirit and show us how you're changing the face of fitness!
Submit your story and photos at strongfitnessmag.com/womentowatch and you could be featured in an upcoming issue as one of the next ***Women to Watch***.

STRONGCAMP

TORONTO, ON

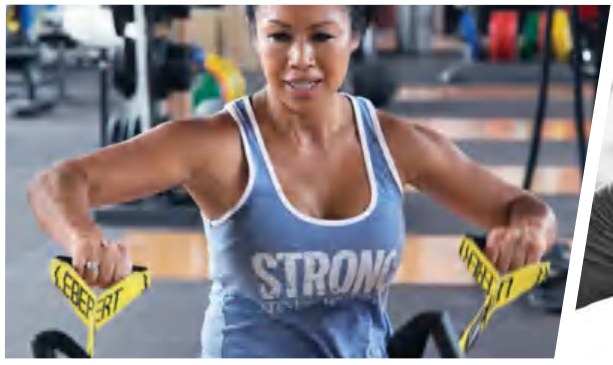
With Senior Ambassador **NICHELLE LAUS**

Guest Speaker **TAMMY STROME, RNCP** *Held at* **OPTIMUM TRAINING CENTRE**

STRONGCAMP AMBASSADOR NICHELLE LAUS TAKES THE WARM-UP TO THE STREETS.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL BUCETA

ATTEMPTING THE MONKEY BARS WHILE THE CAMPERS CHEER HER ON.



GETTING IN THE RING FOR A KICKBOXING WORKOUT

TURN FOR MORE CAMPS!

STRONGCAMP
MINNEAPOLIS, MN

With Senior Ambassador
TARA THATCHER
Special Guest **LIZ NIERZWICKI**
Host Gym **ALLEGIANCE FITNESS**

PRESSING THAT BARBELL LIKE A BOSS!

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL BUCETA

SWEATY BUT STILL SMILING.

FEELING THE BURN DURING A SET OF BICEPS CURLS.

STRESS LESS

Under pressure? Follow these tips for avoiding a meltdown.

Top 5 Stress-Fighting Foods

Eat your way calm with these tips from sports dietitian Emily Satrazemis, RD:

1. NUT BUTTER AND OATMEAL. Carbs first thing in the morning help to calm high cortisol levels from poor sleep or stress. In addition, the healthy fat, protein, and fiber control blood sugar throughout the day to keep your energy and hunger in check! As a bonus, this combo contains tryptophan, the precursor to the mood-balancing chemical serotonin.

2. PUMPKIN SEEDS. A half cup provides 100 percent of your daily value of magnesium, which is used by your body to combat stress. Other foods high in magnesium include dark leafy greens, nuts, and beans.

3. LENTILS. One cup contains 80 percent of your daily value for folic acid, which may help battle symptoms of depression and is required to produce serotonin. Lentils also contain 37 percent of your daily value of magnesium, and are high in fiber and protein to stabilize blood sugar levels.

4. DARK CHOCOLATE. One large square provides 24 percent of your daily value for magnesium. In addition, its serious endorphin-producing power allows it to act as a mild stimulant.

5. SALMON. Fatty fish such as salmon and mackerel are high in omega 3 fatty acids, which can boost brain power, mood, and protect your heart from stress-induced health effects.

25 Minutes of mindful meditation performed on three consecutive days that were shown to improve cortisol reactivity in healthy individuals, according to a study in the journal *Psychoendocrinology*.

WE ASKED YOU...

What stresses you out the most?

- **41%** My job
- **37%** Money/Finances
- **12%** My weight & health
- **7%** Running the household
- **3%** Family issues

Say "Om"

Rough day? Practice these yoga poses shown to reduce stress and anxiety:

Child's Pose
Bridge Pose
Standing Forward Fold
Cat/Cow Pose
Pigeon Pose
Head-to-Knee
Corpse Pose (Savasana)

SFM **Check out *strongfitnessmag.com* for more chill-inducing yoga poses.**

7 WAYS TO BUST WORK STRESS

1. Keep a journal of incidents that caused you stress and how you responded to them for two weeks. Look for patterns so you can identify triggers and avoid them, or develop a way to cope with them.

2. Develop healthy responses to a stressful day such as hitting the gym, going to yoga, or kicking back with a good book, rather than reaching for a bottle of wine or a bag of chips.

3. Set a time to unplug from your work phone and emails. Establishing these boundaries will help you separate your home life from your office life.

4. Take vacation days when possible to avoid burnout. Use this time to disconnect completely from your work and do something that relaxes you.

5. Practice relaxation techniques that you can do for a few minutes each day, such as deep breathing, meditation and mindfulness exercises.

6. Discuss a plan for managing workplace stressors you've identified with your supervisor or manager. This might include employer-sponsored wellness programs, identifying what is expected of you, or making improvements to your workspace to make it more comfortable.

7. Seek support from friends and family who can listen or offer advice, or ask your employer about resources for stress management, such as counseling if needed.

SOURCE: AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION PENCIL PHOTO BY PAUL BUCETA

CELLUCOR®

TEAM CELLUCOR® ATHLETE

KARINA BAYMILLER

G4 FOURTH GENERATION

*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

FEEL IT...

CROSSFUEL - Intensity is a groundbreaking pre-workout formula designed for unsurpassed muscle performance, endurance and energy with a feeling of euphoria.

The potent combination of L-Citrulline, Beta-Alanine, Creatine HCL & PURE ATP makes Intensity a powerhouse of athletic energy, fueling a simply amazing workout.

Intensity is powered by natural caffeine from Green Coffee Bean antioxidants from Olive leaf, and organic grape seed to support the adrenals.

FUEL IT...

CROSSFUEL - Amino REPS is a revolutionary, new, high performance amino acid and hydration powder designed to push performance and recovery to the next level. With a clinically validated BCAA ratio of 45:35:20 enhanced with Astragin, Amino REPS is ultra-refreshing and can be taken any time you drink water on training days. The addition of Crystallized Coconut Water and Betaine provides working muscles vital electrolytes and helps lower the effects of Cortisol.

www.myCROSSFUEL.com

FINISH IT...

CROSSFUEL - Recover in hours not days! Rapid Recovery sets a new standard in muscle glycogen replenishment, repair and protein synthesis containing a 1:1 ratio of fast acting isolate protein with high Insulin reacting complex carbs. The anabolic window is the key to supporting muscle growth. This 30 minute period, immediately post exercise, is when your body is primed for muscle growth and repair, if given the proper nutrients. Containing new Cherry Pure, Tart Cherry extract, Rapid Recovery contains vital compounds, critical for muscle growth while reducing inflammation, muscle soreness and increasing recovery.

INFORMED-CHOICE.ORG
Trusted by sport

» ZERO ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS
» ZERO ARTIFICIAL FLAVOURS
» ZERO ARTIFICIAL COLOURS

AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY AT
GNC
LIVE WELL

THE LOGOS AND OTHER MARKS ON THIS PACKAGE INCLUDING CROSSFUEL™ ARE PROTECTED BY TRADEMARK LAW AND MAY NOT BE USED WITHOUT WRITTEN CONSENT. © 2015 WELLNX LIFE SCIENCES INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.